Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, August 2, 1917, at 11:30 a.m.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.
The Right Hon. W. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minutes 1 and 2).
The Right Hon. E. S. Montagu, M.P., Secretary of State for India (for Minute 1).
The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minute 8).

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.
Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.
The Right Hon. Sir Edward Carson, K.C., M.P.
Rear-Admiral Lionel Halsey, C.B., Third Sea Lord of the Admiralty (for Minute 8).
The Right Hon. Lord Islington, G.C.M.G., D.S.C., Under-Secretary of State for India (for Minute 1).
Mr. Philip Kere.
Mr. Joseph Davies.

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.
Colonel E. D. Storrs, C.B., D.S.O., Assistant Secretary.
Major L. Storrs, Assistant Secretary.
Indian Reforms:
Grant of King's Commissions to Indians.

1. THE War Cabinet had before them two Memoranda, one (G.T.-1386) (Appendix I) by the present Secretary of State for India, and the second (G.T.-1478) (Appendix II) by his predecessor in office, pointing out that the question of granting King's commissions to Indians had been under consideration both in India and at home for many years, but that no progress had been made with it owing to the unwillingness of the War Office to concede the principle of giving Indians command over Europeans. The view of the Indian Government, which was shared by Mr. Montagu and Mr. Austen Chamberlain, was that the time was ripe for the introduction of certain political and administrative reforms (War Cabinet 172, Minute 13, and War Cabinet 176, Minute 18), and that in these reforms should be included the granting of King's commissions to natives of India. It was claimed that the difficulty of supplying sufficient officers of pure European descent to the Indian Army, the serious effect on recruiting of the racial bar, and the widespread demand in India for higher military employment for Indians, rendered it imperative that His Majesty's Government should come to a decision without delay, and make an early announcement to the effect that they accepted in principle the appointment of Indians to commissioned rank in His Majesty's Army.

Mr. Montagu maintained that it was impossible to tell an Indian that he may control the destinies of Englishmen if he became a Judge or an Indian civilian, but that if he fights for the Empire he can never expect to hold a position of authority. In case the objection were urged that Indians, if granted commissions, might be placed in a position to issue commands to British and Colonial soldiers, he said he did not think that this contingency need be apprehended for a considerable number of years; in any case he intended to give the Indian Government a hint to prevent any risk of the kind that might jeopardise the prospects of the new departure, if sanctioned. Indian troops had displayed the greatest gallantry on many battle-fields in different parts of the world, and the fact that they were still barred from obtaining King's commissions was causing the profoundest dissatisfaction, and was very gravely hampering recruiting.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies said that personally he had always been in favour of making this concession; he felt bound, however, to tell the Cabinet that he was informed that there would be trouble if Indians were put in command of Australian or Canadian troops, for instance. As it was, the admission of Indians to the Imperial War Cabinet and Conference had been the subject of much criticism in the Colonies.

The Secretary of State for War confessed himself to be strongly against the proposal. He was certain that the vast majority of the men in the British Service were absolutely opposed to it. He doubted if, in future, British officers would be induced to enter the Indian Army if they knew that they would be liable to serve under Indians. If natives were granted King's commissions, they would have to be treated exactly as British officers were, both in regard to promotion and other things, and, sooner or later, an Indian would be commanding a mixed force. The present proposal would be most unpopular, and it might seriously affect recruiting, both of officers and men, in the British Service.

Lord Curzon thought that it was quite impossible for the Cabinet to refuse the concession. The principle had been accepted, and its adoption had been urged by successive Governments in India for more than a generation. He himself had carefully studied the question during his seven years' tenure of the Viceroyalty, when he had been prepared to submit proposals which he believed would have been accepted by His Majesty's Government at the time had it not been for the uncompromising opposition of Lord Kitchener; and yet Sir William Lockhart, who was Lord Kitchener's predecessor, who died in India before completing his tenure of office, and who
was an Indian army officer of great experience, had been in favour of granting King’s commissions to natives, as, Lord Curzon believed, had been Lord Roberts. Indian soldiers had suffered and died for the integrity of the Empire; their loyalty and gallantry had been conspicuous; from every point of view they had clearly established their right to have conceded what, in Lord Curzon’s opinion, they had been entitled to receive many years back. His Majesty’s Government had now under consideration measures involving political concessions of possibly a far-reaching character. The part played by India in the war, apart from her splendid achievements in the military field, afforded no special justification for an extended share in the administration of that country at this juncture. Were political opportunities to be granted and military service to go unrewarded? As Viceroy, he had been able to form an Imperial Cadet Corps, but this was not sufficient. In twenty years’ time, conditions would be widely different, and this prospect must be frankly and fearlessly faced. Various suggestions and schemes had been put forward; he himself had been inclined to favour the formation of separate Indian units, to be officered eventually by Indians only. In the course of time the British officers of certain units would drop out on their retirement, and the officer personnel would remain purely Indian. In regard to the objection that British officers would not wish to serve under Indians, was there any officer in the British service who would be reluctant to accept the leadership of Sir Pertab Singh, for instance? The only criticism he had to offer in respect to the present proposal was that it might be advisable to postpone the concession until the end of the war. Many points of importance had to be considered, viz., the nature of the commission, the prospects of advancement, the character of the men selected, and so on. He understood that the Secretary of State for India and the Indian Government were agreed that a thorough examination of these factors, and a considered decision in regard to them, must be postponed for the present. He was, however, wholeheartedly in favour of His Majesty’s Government accepting the principle, and granting, as an earnest of their intentions and policy, commissions to the nine Indian gentlemen nominated by the Indian Government, all of whom were personally known to the present Military Secretary at the India Office.

Sir Edward Carson deprecated the possibility of the Cabinet coming to a momentous decision on account of sentiment, particularly as sentiment during the war was not conducive to wise counsel and decision. No one disputed the fact that Indian soldiers had rendered glorious service in the field. But, in his own profession, the policy of admitting Indian students to the British Bar—a policy the wisdom of which he had always doubted—had not proved a success. Indian barristers in England, on account of caste, tastes, prejudices, stood aloof. Their associations with their British confrères was purely nominal. No Indian had ever succeeded at the English Bar, and the majority had returned to India disgusted, resentful, and hostile, and generally identified themselves with seditionary movements in their own country. Any similar disillusionment in the case of the army would have far more serious results. He agreed with the War Office view that the grant of commissions to natives of India would entail a great risk from a military point of view, in that it involves placing native Indian officers in such a position from which they would be entitled to command white officers, and they are therefore not prepared to take the responsibility of advising such a step. They would further suggest that the question might be deferred for consideration at the close of the war. He agreed that the whole question could best be considered at the end of the war.

Lord Islington said that he entirely concurred in the views put forward by Lord Curzon, the Indian Government, and the India Office. As regards the analogy of Indians and the English Bar, he thought that it was not apposite. Young Indians who came to England to study law were not selected by the Indian Government,
but were irresponsible individuals. At the end of the war there must almost certainly be an Imperial military system, and the right of Indians to King's commissions could not be denied. The question could not be considered from the purely and intrinsically military point of view.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was of opinion that all the arguments against the proposal were out of date; times and conditions had changed, and facts had to be faced. The Government of India, after the most careful consideration, and with a full sense of responsibility, had come to a decision. It only remained for His Majesty's Government to endorse that decision.

General Smuts considered that the difficulties in the way of accepting the measure had been exaggerated. The new proposal was simply part of a larger scheme. Concessions of the nature suggested were inevitable. He therefore concurred in principle in the grant of King's commissions to Indians.

Lord Milner agreed that His Majesty's Government could not oppose the considered views of the Government of India. Mr. Henderson and Mr. Barnes also signified their concurrence in the acceptance of the principle.

The War Cabinet decided—

To sanction an announcement that they accepted in principle the appointment of Indians to commissioned rank in His Majesty's Army; that the general conditions in which such commissions will be granted in future are being discussed by the Government of India, the India Office, and the War Office, but that for war service nine commissions will at once be granted—seven captaincies and two lieutenancies to soldiers recommended by the Government of India.

Sir Edward Carson and Lord Derby desired that their dissent from the above decision should be recorded.

2. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum, prepared in the Colonial Office, on the oil situation at home, with a covering letter by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in his capacity as Minister in charge of all oil questions (Paper G.T.-1569).

The War Cabinet agreed that steps should be taken to develop the petroleum resources of this country on lines most favourable to the State, and authorised—

The Secretary of State for the Colonies to form a Committee to prepare a Bill, the Committee to include—

Mr. Long.
Sir George Cave.
Sir Albert Stanley.
A Law Officer.
A representative of the Treasury.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that there had been a further slight withdrawal of Russian troops.

4. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that he had little to add to what had appeared in the press. With reference to the German report about our attack in masses, we employed 14 British and 2 French divisions, on a front of 15 miles, against 16 German divisions, from each of which we had taken prisoners. We had 18 divisions in reserve, as against 9 reserve German divisions. We had captured Pilckem Bridge. We had achieved all our objectives and something more on two-thirds of the front, and on the remaining third we had captured the first and second but not the third...
Russia: Naval and Military Assistance to.

Submarines.

Shipping Losses.

Anti-Aircraft Guns.

5. With reference to proposals in Paper G.T.-1531 (iii), and by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in Paper G.T.-1549, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that he gathered the French were about to assist Russia with a number of military officers.

The First Sea Lord stated that it might be possible, but not easy, for the Navy to spare some senior officers.

The War Cabinet decided—

(a.) That the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should ask Sir George Buchanan to ascertain whether the Russian Government would welcome Naval assistance, and suggesting the forms such assistance might take, the telegram to be submitted to the Admiralty and War Office for concurrence.

(b.) To discuss at the forthcoming Conference the question of the Allies putting pressure on Russia to restore discipline and resume the offensive, as a condition of further supplies of guns and officers.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 200, Minute 10, the First Sea Lord reported that, as the result of inquiries by the Senior Naval Officer, it was believed that the submarine engaged off Gibraltar had been sunk. He also reported a claim by a trawler to have sunk an enemy submarine.

7. The First Sea Lord reported that there had been very heavy shipping losses in the Atlantic yesterday, especially of outward-bound vessels, which were due to the concentration of patrols on convoys. He was endeavouring to arrange for the grouping of outward-bound vessels at two or three centres, with a view to their being convoyed by the escorts going to meet homeward-bound convoys. There was, however, a risk that the homeward-bound convoys might not arrive punctually at the rendezvous with the outward-bound convoys, and that the escorting destroyers, whose fuel capacity was limited, might be compelled to return without them, but that risk would have to be taken.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 23, Minute 15, and War Cabinet 190, Minute 15, the War Cabinet considered a Memorandum, by the Secretary of State for War, on the allocation of 3-inch 20-cwt. guns between the Navy and the Army. The War Cabinet was asked to consider whether, in the interests of Home Defence, guns should be diverted from the Navy.

The First Lord pointed out that of 3,600 vessels armed only 800 were armed effectively for countering submarine warfare at the submarine range to-day; the rest were guns of low velocity. The average nett increase in the number of ships armed with a gun of any kind is only thirty-seven per week. Every effort was being made to economise in the use of guns by transhipment.

The War Office representatives stated that they did not wish to press for any change if the guns were needed for ships.

The War Cabinet decided—

To adhere to its previous decision.
9. With reference to War Cabinet 199, Minute 1, the War Cabinet discussed the revised draft of the Memorandum on the Submarine Campaign (Paper G.T.-1539 A).

The War Cabinet decided—

To omit figures of estimated enemy losses, to state the reasons why they could not be given, and to add that, whereas the Germans were probably completing two or three submarines a week, we were certainly not sinking as many.

Other changes in the draft were agreed to, and the Memorandum as amended was approved and ordered to be sent to Lord Northcliffe for confidential communication to President Wilson.

The final draft is printed in the Appendix III.

10. The War Cabinet decided—

To postpone the consideration of the gun ammunition programme for 1918 (Paper G.T.-1365) pending the development of the financial situation.

The Minister of Munitions undertook to circulate during the following week some provisional proposals.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
August 2, 1917.
War Cabinet,
I WOULD venture with great respect to urge the Cabinet to come to a decision about commissions for Indians.

This is not a scheme of my own, but is a long-protracted controversy, often nearing solution, which was brought to the notice of the Cabinet by my predecessor and is strongly pressed by the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief in India.

I maintain that it is absolutely impossible to tell an Indian that he may control the destinies of Englishmen if he becomes a judge or an Indian civilian, that to the talking people and to the politicians all avenues are open, but that if he fights for the Empire he can never expect to hold a position of authority.

I ask the Cabinet to sanction an announcement that the Cabinet has decided to accept in principle the appointment of Indians to commissioned rank in His Majesty's Army; that the general conditions upon which such commissions will be earned are being discussed between the Government of India, the India Office, and the War Office; but that for war service nine commissions will at once be granted—seven captaincies and two lieutenancies.

The nine commissions which the Indian Government ask for at once are to be given to the following men, who were all educated in the Imperial Cadet Corps and who have seen service in the field:

As Captains:

Zanwar Amar Singh, of Kanauta, Rajput. Served in France.
Khan Muhammad Akbar Khan, of Hoti, Pathan. Served in Egypt, France, and Mesopotamia.
Malik Muntaq Muhammad Khan. Served in Mesopotamia.
Khanwar Pirthi Singh, of Kota, Rajput. Served in France.

As Lieutenants:


In case the objection is urged that these men, if granted commissions, may be placed in a position in which they might have to issue commands to Australian troops (or even to British troops for the present), I may say I do not think this is a contingency that need be apprehended. We are all anxious to make the scheme a success, and I should propose to give the Government of India a hint to prevent any risk of the kind that might jeopardise the prospects of the new departure. So far as we know, the men proposed for commissions are now either employed with Indian regiments or are on the staff in personal appointments. If commissioned they will presumably continue to hold their present appointments unless the Government of India wish to put them through a course of training with an Indian unit.

As regards the procedure that would be followed if the commissions are granted, I would propose that the War Office should gazette the men to the Unattached List.
of the British Army and to post them to the Indian Army either in the same “Gazette” or the following one. The Government of India will then have full power to deal with the officers as they think fit. (Initialled) E. S. M.

August 1, 1917.

APPENDIX II.

G.T.—1478.

Circulated by the Secretary of State for India to the Cabinet.

INDIAN REFORMS: GRANT OF COMMISSIONS TO INDIANS.

ON entering into office I find the following completed note by my predecessor. I entirely agree with Mr. Chamberlain’s view, and trust that the Cabinet will be able to consider the question at an early date.

July 20, 1917.

I circulate to the Cabinet a Memorandum on the grant of King’s commissions to Indians and correspondence with the Army Council on the subject. A Cabinet decision is necessary.

July 10, 1917.

MEMORANDUM.

The question of granting King’s commissions to Indians has been under consideration for many years, both in India and at home; but no progress has been made with it owing to the unwillingness of the War Office to concede the principle of giving Indians command over Europeans. Various alternatives and compromises have been discussed with a view to avoiding this difficulty, but all have been discarded, partly on purely military grounds, partly because it was clear that none of them would satisfy the genuine ambition for a military career which has undoubtedly been growing in recent years—especially in the aristocratic families of Native States as well as of British India. The ambition has been further stimulated by the war, while the right of Indian gentlemen to take his place beside his white fellow-subjects in the King’s Army is claimed as included in the conception of India’s “partnership” in the British Empire on which it is based in the programme of the best and most moderate Indian politicians.

Recognising this fact, the Government of India have included the grant of King’s commissions in the scheme of political and administrative reforms which they have submitted for the consideration of His Majesty’s Government. (See Appendix.) The Government of India have recommended that Indian youths who by birth, character, and education are fitted to aspire to high military rank should be given the opportunity of obtaining commissions in the Army. The actual scheme proposed by the Viceroy is that ten vacancies at Sandhurst should be allotted to Indians for this purpose. Candidates would be nominated by the Local Governments and recommended by the Commander-in-Chief for the approval of the Viceroy. The approved candidates would compete for the Sandhurst examination, and those qualifying for admission up the number of vacancies allotted would join as Cadets and be eligible for commissions. After prolonged consideration and discussion with my Council I informed the Government of India that I was prepared to support proposals on these lines, and the Government of India are to formulate a complete scheme to give effect to them.

To meet the claims of Indian soldiers who have entered the army through the ranks in the hope of obtaining commissions, it is proposed to establish military schools in India.
With a view to establishing the principle of granting commissions to Indians it was suggested that commissions should be conferred at an early date on a few Indian officers specially selected from officers holding commissions in the Indian land forces or honorary commissions, and from Indian officers with Indian regiments. It is recognised that the latter class (subject to rare exceptions) have not the education or standing that would fit them for combatant commissions; and to compensate them for their exclusion, it is proposed to grant to Indian officers of specially meritorious service honorary commissions as captains or lieutenants while still on the active list, instead of as hitherto only after retirement. The Viceroy has now recommended nine officers holding commissions in the Indian land forces for commissions as captains and lieutenants in recognition of their services in the present war, and it is only as regards these officers that the proposal to confer commissions has as yet taken definite shape.

Pending receipt of the Government of India's detailed proposals it is not possible to establish a regular scheme for the grant of commissions to Indians, as many complicated questions, such as the provision of training in India, are involved. The correspondence with the War Office which is printed below ensued.

Letter from India Office to War Office (M. 19105), dated the 1st June, 1917.

Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 100/India/621 M.S. 1, India, dated the 15th March, 1916, I am directed to forward copy of a telegram from the Viceroy (Army Department), No. 7688, dated the 26th May, putting forward the names of nine officers of the Native Indian land forces for commissions in the Indian Army.

The Army Council are aware that the principle of granting of King's commissions to Indians has been under discussion in India for a good many years past, and it has been examined from every possible point of view.

The considerations mentioned in your letter of the 15th March, 1916, have not been overlooked, and I am to explain that a large programme of constitutional reforms, in recognition of the part played by India during the war and of her legitimate hopes and aspirations is now before His Majesty's Government. It is in this connection that the Government of India—in a despatch from which the relevant extracts are enclosed (No. 17 of the 24th November, 1916, paragraphs 16-18)—have formally proposed the grant of King's commissions to natives of India. (See Appendix.)

In view of the difficulty of supplying sufficient officers of pure European descent to the Indian Army, of the effect on recruiting of the racial bar, of the Government of India's strong recommendation, of the widespread demand in India for higher military employment for Indians, and of India's services to the Empire during the war, Mr. Chamberlain is convinced that the time has arrived when the principle of the granting of King's commissions to Indians must be admitted. He has therefore been examining afresh with the Government of India how best to give effect to it, and the enclosed recent correspondence* will show what stage the discussion has reached, and will prove to the Army Council that the matter has been given prolonged and very earnest consideration both in India and in London. It is, of course, realised that the granting of King's commissions to natives of India may involve the placing of Indians in positions from which they will be entitled to command Europeans at some future date, that to do so must be considered in the nature of an experiment, and that we have no precedent to guide us in the matter. But the experiment is not one that can lead to sudden catastrophe, and it is proposed to initiate it on a small scale and to watch it carefully during its gradual development.

Mr. Secretary Chamberlain accordingly hopes that the Army Council will now accept the principle, and will approve the only part of the scheme to which effect can be given at once, namely, the grant of commissions in the Indian Army to the nine officers of the Native Indian land forces whose names are now submitted by the Government of India for that honour. He would suggest that that part of the proposals which relates to the selection and training of the Indian cadets should be reserved for consideration later after receipt of the despatch containing the full scheme from the Government of India.

* Not reprinted.
The most suitable method of giving effect to the present proposition would seem to be to post these nine Indian officers to the Unattached List and then to gazette them to the Indian Army. This would appear to meet the provisions of Article 35 of the Royal Warrant 1914.

Letter from War Office to India Office (100/India/1880 M.S. 1), dated 5th July, 1917.

Sir,

With reference to your letter No. M. 19105 of the 1st June, 1917, on the subject of granting commissions in the Indian Army to nine officers of the Indian land forces, I am commanded by the Army Council to inform you that after the most careful consideration they have come to the conclusion that to grant commissions to natives of India would entail a great risk from a military point of view, in that it involves placing native Indian officers in a position where they would be entitled to command European officers. For this reason the Council are not prepared to take the responsibility of advising such a step.

The Council further suggest that the question might be deferred for consideration at the close of the war, together with many other Imperial matters affecting the Army as a whole, all of which will then be brought forward for review.

APPENDIX.


16. The rewards that we have thus far enumerated involve no change in the constitution of the Indian Army. But the war is bringing within the horizon problems of Army reorganisation which may result in very wide and radical alterations in the existing system, and one of the most important of the questions that will call for early settlement is whether the time has not come for opening to Indians British commissions in His Majesty's Army. Such a step forward, although primarily the most striking recognition possible of the services of the Indian Army, would at the same time remove a grievance long felt and in many quarters resented; it would also form an appropriate part of the policy of admitting Indians to the higher ranks of the public services. It would, in fact, fall within all the three categories of recognition described in an earlier paragraph.

The removal of this bar before the war might not from the point of view of the Indian Army have been received with quite unmixed satisfaction. The present generation of Indian officers and men have grown up in the existing system; they regard with respect and attachment the British officers under whom they serve, and under whose fathers, in many cases, their own fathers had also served before them, and before they would have been ready to welcome officers of Indian race, they would have liked to know what sort of men these would be and from what races and classes they would be drawn. Of the many gallant Subadar and Risaldars serving in the Army, few could be found qualified by age and education for selection to the British commissioned ranks. The question to them was, therefore, not one of pressing and personal interest; and it is correct to say that before the war the demand for commissions for Indians was a great deal stronger from outside than from within the Army itself. This has all been changed from the day that the Indian regiments valiantly passed through their baptism of fire on European battlefields. They have seen how quickly their small band of British officers can be swept away; they have seen or heard that in the French and Russian armies men of the African and Asiatic regiments may rise to full commissioned rank. They have seen Turkish officers bravely leading their troops in the most modern warfare, and they must ask themselves why to Indians alone this privilege should be denied.

While, however, they have realised their work—it is well to use plain words to represent plain truths—they have also realised their limitations. While, on the one side, for the first time they have felt the proud privilege of fighting for the very
liberties of the Empire, on the other they have realised, as never before, the mighty resources of that Empire, the fortitude and numbers of its men, and its almost limitless capacity for producing guns and all the engines of war. We trust that the time may never come when serious and organised attempts by enemies within our borders may sorely tempt the Indian troops from their allegiance, but, if unhappily such efforts should be made, the Army will know, as it never knew before, the utter folly of any such treasonable designs. The war has, indeed, at one and the same time established the case for the new privilege, and removed one of the old causes of apprehension which for so long has barred the way.

17. On the other grounds for the grant of this privilege we need not dwell at length. The opening of a higher military career to their sons would be welcomed by all Indian fathers who have been connected with the Army, by the landed aristocracy, and by many who have attained eminence in other walks of life. By Indians at large it would be welcomed as the removal of a bar which has been felt to be a shir upon their loyalty and capacity. To grant it would be in keeping, to refuse it inconsistent, with the whole policy which underlies our recommendations.

While we advocate unhesitatingly the taking of this step, we do not fail to recognise how many and how great are the obstacles that stand in the way. It is impossible for us to submit to you at this stage any detailed and considered scheme for carrying out this most important recommendation. We apprehend, though we have no information on the subject, that great and important changes will be effected in the whole military system of the Empire as a consequence of the war. From these changes India, and the Indian Army, cannot stand aloof. They may have a vital bearing, not upon the principle of our proposal, but upon the methods whereby thereby our object may best be achieved. Further, there are social difficulties to be surmounted, and problems of training to be solved. Even among those who know India and the Indian Army best widely different opinions are held. Some advocate the training of Indian cadets who shall in time completely officer Indian regiments specially constituted for this purpose; others lay great stress on the intermingling of British and Indian officers in the same units. Some advocate the foundation of an Indian Sandhurst; others insist that the training should be carried out in England, as an indispensable condition to its success. Others again would lay stress upon the young cadets of both races being trained together in whichever country that training may take place, in the belief that it is in early youth that they can best learn to appreciate each others merits and understand each others idiosyncrasies.

18. We cannot yet offer final opinions on these and kindred points of difficulty, but we shall lose no time in investigating these most important questions. We consider, however, that at the time when the grant of this privilege is announced in general terms, it would be most prudent to use words of caution. The efficiency of the Army must not be jeopardised by too rapid an advance on untried ground, and the numbers to be admitted must at first be comparatively few, and on a scale that is tentative, until practical experience has shown us how to secure the best material, how best to train it, and how best it may be utilised.

We must not forget that, even in the sphere of civil employment, the present stage of progress towards the free admission of Indians was not reached at once; the beginnings were small, and the process a slow one. In the Army the issues at stake are more vital, and the consequences of a false step more disastrous, the need of good leadership is more essential, the disciplinary relation between superior and subordinate is much more strict, and the social intercourse between men of different race in the same service necessarily closer than is the case in civil life.

It is not by ignoring these difficulties, but by facing them frankly, and by patiently solving them, that the best hope of success lies for this new and striking departure that we so earnestly commend to your attention.
THE true index to the success or failure of the submarine campaign in future will be the balance between merchant ships sunk and merchant ships put into commission, for the measures we have taken for shortening voyages, better loading, quicker turning round, confiscation of interned German shipping, diversion of Allied and Neutral ships from coastal or non-war traffic, and other methods of making improved use of existing resources, which have enabled us to keep up tonnage entrances since February despite losses, will soon have had their full effect. The effect of the submarine in restricting the sea-borne supplies of the Allies will then be accurately shown by the relative figures of loss and gain. The figures given in gross tons since February are as follows:

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<th>Allied and Neutral</th>
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<td>321,000</td>
<td>374,000</td>
<td>695,000</td>
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<td><strong>1,517,000</strong></td>
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*On basis of first 29 days of July. †On basis of losses February to June.

In addition, there are a number of vessels damaged by torpedo or mine. For the first six months of 1917 the figures were as follows:

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</tbody>
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Of these damaged ships, about 50 per cent. may be considered as permanently out of commission for the duration of the war, owing to the places in which they are beached, &c.

The following tables give the actual losses on the basis of the experience of the first six months of the unrestricted submarine campaign:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>On basis of February–July 1917</th>
<th>On basis of May, June, July 1917</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Per month.</td>
<td>Per annum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>386,000</td>
<td>4,600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied and neutral</td>
<td>388,000</td>
<td>3,100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>674,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,700,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Looking at the position as a whole, and taking into account the exceptional character of the April figures and the irrecoverable loss from ships damaged but not sunk, the average total monthly losses cannot at present be taken at less than 650,000 tons per month, of which about 500,000 per month is ocean-going tonnage.

When we come to consider whether this rate of loss is likely to rise or fall in future, the factors are so numerous and so incalculable that any estimate must be more or less of a guess. The submarine war is a contest in which both sides are continually improving their weapons and their methods. Results, therefore, are bound to fluctuate, and relative success and failure depend upon continuous energy and resource, not merely upon the sea, but in building and invention on land.

But certain broad facts begin to stand out. It has never been found practicable to prevent the German submarine from using the many points of entry into the North Sea, nor, as experience in the Channel and the Dardanelles has shown, has it been possible to close the exits therefrom, though the passage is being made steadily more dangerous. So long as this remains the case the enemy submarine will not be deprived of the power of successful offensive. But there are now nearly 3,000 vessels whose sole duty it is to protect merchant shipping from loss by direct attack or the strewing of mines. Our operations have already forced them to rely almost entirely on submerged attack by torpedo, but how effective this wholly hidden attack can be is seen from the fact that during April, May, and June 75 per cent. of the merchantmen sunk did not see either the submarine or the periscope before being struck. Further, there is no doubt that German submarine resources are increasing. The best opinion considers that they complete two to three submarines a week. It is quite impossible to frame any accurate estimate of their losses. The results of the engagements are most difficult to judge, the certainties being but a fraction of the probables, the probables of the possibles, and the possibles of the encounters. Estimates of their losses from other sources than direct attack are obviously even less trustworthy. But the conclusion arrived at is that the number of sinkings do not equal the number of new submarines turned out.

On the other hand, the methods and instruments for hampering the movements of the submarines, and for attacking them when detected, are steadily increasing. It is extremely likely that the moral of the German submarine service is declining under the continuous and increasing strain of the anti-submarine attack. As regards the protection of merchantmen, the fact that the submarines have now to rely very largely on submerged attack, by depriving them of their gun armament, has diminished their efficiency and shortened the period for which they can remain at sea. The extension of the convoy system as more patrol and escort vessels become available will also, it is hoped, make successful attack more difficult. The winter season ought also to have the same effect. Good results have also followed from the special courses for training merchant captains in how to evade submarines and to handle their ships in the event of an attack. As many captains and mates as possible are being put through these courses. As regards speed, it is considered highly desirable that a sea-going speed of at least thirteen knots should be obtained in all new construction, in order that there may be no doubt that an enemy submarine cannot, when submerged, overhaul the surface craft, and thereby get into a favourable position for attack. It must be borne in mind that the submerged speed of the new submarines is constantly increasing, and it may be taken that at present they attain a submerged speed of between eleven and twelve knots.

To sum up, it is obviously impossible to form anything approaching a trustworthy forecast of the future, but so far as an estimate is of value as a general guide, it is estimated that the submarine losses will not increase above the average of the last three months, though they will fluctuate, and that they ought to diminish.

This, however, leaves us confronted with a very serious position. The only possible basis upon which we can make our plans for the future is that the recent rate of losses will continue, and this means that they will amount to an average of 650,000 tons per month, i.e., 60 per cent. British and 40 per cent. Allied and Neutral. How serious this can be seen by turning to the probable figures of new construction. During the first six months of 1917 only 485,000 tons of new shipping was launched from British yards apart from naval requirements, as against 2,250,000 tons sunk of British shipping alone. For the second half of the year the highest estimate of new construction is 1,000,000 tons from British yards, as against a loss to British shipping alone, on the basis of average losses since February of twice as much. For
next year the programme towards which we are working provides for the construction of commercial shipping at the rate of some 3,000,000 tons per annum, but this rate of output is dependent on an increase in shipbuilding yards and steel production, and cannot be reached until well towards the end of 1918. The output during the year ought to be about 2,300,000 tons if our plans materialise as we hope. This figure involves the reduction of our naval programme to the absolute minimum. It is uncertain what further increment will be available from other countries, but the amount which countries other than the U.S.A. can produce is not likely to exceed the rate of 200,000 tons per annum, mainly owing to the difficulty of obtaining steel. The total contracts still to be completed on British account in the U.S.A. amount to 132 vessels of a gross tonnage of 741,000, the bulk of which is for delivery in 1918.

Thus the broad conclusion is that for the last six months of 1917 we can only see our way to an average output from British yards of 180,000 tons per month, and for 1918 of 200,000 tons per month (though towards the end of the year the output will, we hope, have reached 250,000 tons per month), with a possible addition of 20,000 tons per month from countries other than the U.S.A., while the average monthly loss on the basis already described is 650,000 tons per month. The most dangerous period will be the first six to nine months of 1918, before either the United Kingdom or the United States obtain the full benefit of their enlarged programmes.

Despite, however, the seriousness of these figures, the submarine campaign is certainly not likely to force Great Britain and her Allies to stop the war, if America puts forth her utmost effort. But unless between them the Allies can equalise losses and gains, it will inevitably diminish the effective pressure they can bring to bear upon the Central Powers. The British rate of import before the war was 4,900,000 tons per month; for 1916 it was 3,700,000 tons per month; for the first five months of 1917 it was only 2,800,000 tons per month. The reduction up to 1916 was due to the use of merchant vessels on purely military and naval work, but since 1916 it has been mainly due to the submarine campaign. It means that our imports are now practically all on war account, and very near their bedrock figure. Despite all efforts to increase the production of foodstuffs and raw material at home, further considerable reductions in the amount of shipping available must force us to reduce the supplies of coal and other necessities to our Allies, or of munitions to the fronts, or to abandon military operations which are vital to the general strategic scheme for breaking up the dominion of the Germanic military power over Central Europe and its Balkan and Turkish allies.

The part, therefore, which the United States can play in dealing with the submarine menace is absolutely vital to the successful prosecution of the war and to the attainment of an early peace. The two most important spheres in which she can concentrate her activities are, first, that of increasing the efficiency and the number of the vessels engaged on the anti-submarine war, for protection of the merchant marine is a far more effective measure than replacement.

Of equal importance is commercial shipbuilding. The deficit to be made up, even when our output is at its maximum, will be between 350,000 and 400,000 tons per month. Will American shipyards be able to supply this amount, and if so, by what date? As already explained, the period of greatest stress will be the first half or three-quarters of 1918. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that we should know as soon as possible the probable American monthly output for the next twelve months.

_August 2, 1917._