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SECRET.C A B I N E T 53 (22).

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet
held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on
Saturday, 30th September, 1922, at 10.30 p.m.

P R E S E N T:-

THE PRIME MINISTER (IN THE CHAIR).

The Right Hon. A. Chamberlain,
M.P., Lord Privy Seal.

The Right Hon. The Viscount
Birkenhead, Lord Chancellor.

The Right Hon. Sir Robert Horne,
G.B.E., K.C., M.P., Chancellor of
the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. E. Shortt, K.C.
M.P., Secretary of State for
Home Affairs.

The Most Hon. The Marquess Curzon
of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,
Secretary of State for Foreign
Affairs.

The Right Hon. W.S. Churchill,
M.P., Secretary of State for
the Colonies.

The Right Hon. The Viscount Peel,
G.B.E., Secretary of State for
India.

The Right Hon. Sir L. Worthington-
Evans, Bart., G.B.E., M.P., Secretary
of State for War.

The Right Hon. The Lord Lee of
Fareham, G.B.E., K.C.B., First Lord
of the Admiralty.

The Right Hon. Sir A. Griffith-
Boscawen, M.P., Minister of
Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. T.J. Macnamara, M.P.,
Minister of Labour.

The Right Hon. R. Munro, K.C.,
M.P., Secretary for Scotland.

The Right Hon. Sir Hamar Greenwood,
Bart., K.C., M.P., Chief Secretary
for Ireland.

The Right Hon. The Earl of
Crawford and Balcarres, K.T.,
First Commissioner of Works.

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:-

Capt. The Right Hon. F.E. Guest,
G.B.E., D.S.O., M.P., Secretary of
State for Air.

General The Earl of Cavan, K.P.,
G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., Chief
of the Imperial General Staff.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Trenchard,
Bart., K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the
Air Staff.

Sir Edward Grigg, K.C.V.O., C.M.G.

Lieut. Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, G.C.B. Secretary.

Lieut. Col. Sir John Chancellor, K.C.M.G., D.S.O.,
Principal Assistant Secretary, C.I.D.

**THE CRISIS
IN THE NEAR
EAST.**

The Non-
execution of
the Proposed
Ultimatum.

1. With reference to Cabinet 52 (22), Conclusion 1, the Cabinet met as a matter of urgency to consider the following telegrams which had just been received from the British High Commissioner at Constantinople in regard to the crisis in the Near East :- viz. Nos. 489 and 490, both dated 30th September, 1922 (Appendix I), and more particularly the information contained therein that the Cabinet's instructions of the previous evening (War Office telegram No. 91255) had not been acted on by General Harington.

**MILITARY
CONSIDERATIONS.**

2. On the military aspect of the matters raised in those telegrams, extreme concern was expressed on the following points :-

- (1) The safety of the British forces at Chanak in view of the advice given on the previous day to the Conference of Ministers by the Chiefs of Staff of the three Services after consideration of General Harington's telegrams Nos. 2506 and 2486, both of September 28th. This advice, as stated by the First Sea Lord in the presence of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the Chief of the Air Staff, was as follows :-

"There was no definite indication that any ultimatum had been sent to Mustafa Kemal. It was considered that in telegram No. 2506 the word "impossible" meant that it was impossible for the existing situation to be allowed to continue from a military point of view, for if the Turks should commence an offensive, the defences of Chanak would be seriously menaced. The moment had accordingly come for General Harington to inform the local Turkish Commander outside Chanak that unless his force were withdrawn at a stated time, fire would be opened by all forces at the disposal of the British Commander - naval, military and air - and that the British front would be cleared by force. It was considered that the Turks should be made to withdraw to such a distance that the Straits would be safe. Continuing, the First Sea Lord said that telegram No. 91247, which had been sent to General Harington the previous night, would have

assured him that he would be supported by the Cabinet if he used force to compel the Turks to retire, and it was possible that he might have already taken the measures which the three Chiefs of Staff now recommended".

(Minutes of Conference of Ministers, 29th September, 1922 at 11.30 a.m.)

These apprehensions were only partially allayed by the statement in Sir Horace Rumbold's telegram No.490 that General Marden had reported a distinct improvement in the situation at Chanak.

(ii) The indications in his recent telegrams that General Harington was intensely pre-occupied with the political situation, which aroused misgivings as to whether he was giving sufficient attention to the military situation.

(iii) The fact that no communication had yet been received from General Harington in regard to the peremptory orders issued on the advice of the Chiefs of Staff of the three Services the previous afternoon (the receipt of which had been acknowledged to the Admiralty by the Naval Commander-in-Chief about twenty-four hours before) for the delivery of an ultimatum to the local Turkish Commanding Officer opposite Chanak.

Shortly after midnight, the Cabinet agreed :-

- (a) That no decision could be taken until General Harington's telegram No.2538 (then on its way) was before the Cabinet.
- (b) That it was essential to a decision that the Cabinet should receive from the three Staffs a fresh appreciation as to how far the safety and future effectiveness of the British forces would be compromised by further delay in the withdrawal of the Turkish nationalist forces opposite Chanak.
- (c) That the First Sea Lord, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, and the Chief of the Air Staff should meet as soon as possible in order to be in a position to advise the Cabinet at 10.0 a.m. on the same morning (October 1st), in the light of General Harington's telegram No.2538 and other recent information, on the following terms of reference :-
 - (1) Whether the British forces at Chanak would be endangered by further delay in the withdrawal of the local Turkish Nationalist forces.
 - (2) Whether, if in two or three days the British forces wished to take

action outside the position now held at Chanak, further delay in the withdrawal of the local Turkish nationalist forces would prevent them doing so.

**POLITICAL
CONSIDERATIONS.**

3. On the political aspect of the question concern was expressed on the following points :-

- (i) That Sir Horace Rumbold and General Harington should apparently contemplate a meeting between the General and Mustapha Kemal at Madania while the Turkish Nationalists, in defiance of several remonstrances and warnings, were still actively violating the essential condition laid down in the Paris Note of September 23rd, that the Government of Angora should undertake not to send troops, either before or during the Conference, into the neutral zones.
- (ii) That, notwithstanding the truculent attitude of Mustapha Kemal, and his flagrant disregard of the Paris Note, the British High Commissioner and General Harington, besides putting pressure on the Greeks in regard to the movements of their warships and transports through the Straits, were anxious that the Powers should compel the Greek army at once to withdraw behind the Maritsa line, before the line had even been fixed, as proscribed in the Paris Note, by the Allied Generals, in accord with the Greek and Turkish military authorities. (General Harington's telegram No.2819, and Sir Horace Rumbold's telegram No.474).
- (iii) As to the danger to peace which this attitude seemed to involve.
- (iv) Generally, as to the apparent progressive deterioration of our political position and prestige, particularly from the point of view of the Dominions, as resulting from the failure up to now of our various attempts to secure compliance with the Paris conditions by an enemy whom we had defeated decisively in the Great War and who possessed only a remnant of his former strength.
- (v) At the extravagance of Mustapha Kemal's demands as indicated in a communiqué, reported by the Press to have been issued in Smyrna, and from other Press sources, foreshadowing his official reply. It was pointed out, however, that this in all probability merely represented the normal first stage of a bargain with Orientals.

There was general agreement that prompt steps must be taken as an essential condition of the Peace

Conference to secure that the Turks, no less than the Greeks and the Allies, observe the conditions laid down in the Paris Note, more particularly by withdrawing their forces from the neutral zones.

Two methods for securing this object were discussed at full length :-

- (i) That we should decline to parley with Mustapha Kemal at Mudania until his troops were withdrawn from the neutral zones.
- (ii) That General Harington, with the Allied Generals at Constantinople, should meet the Greek and Turkish Commanders-in-Chief at Mudania as soon as possible, and that General Harington should, at the outset, as an essential condition of further parley, insist on the withdrawal of the Turkish forces from the neutral zones.

The political question, however, was recognised to be linked with the military aspect, dealt with above in Conclusion 2, and the decision was postponed until the following morning.

4. In the course of the discussions referred to above, the attention of the Cabinet was invited to a decision taken by a Conference of Ministers, hastily assembled on a question of urgency, at 7.45 p.m. the same evening, to the following effect :-

That the Admiralty should inform the Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean to the effect that if Mustapha Kemal complied with the demand in War Office telegram No. 91255, and the Turkish forces around Chanak were withdrawn from the neutral zone, the prohibition on the movements of Greek transports and warships into the Sea of Marmara should be maintained; but that if on the contrary, the Turkish troops were not withdrawn, then the prohibition should be lifted and the Greek transports and warships should be allowed to enter the Sea of Marmara, the Greek authorities being informed. The Greek fleet should in any event not be expelled from the Sea of Marmara.

The Cabinet took note of the above decisions -

(Appendix II).

Appoint 53/22 Secretary

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~~DRAFT~~ CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting held at 10, Downing Street on
Saturday, September 30th. 1922, at 7.45 p.m.

SECRET

P R E S E N T.

The Prime Minister (In the Chair)

The Rt.Hon. A. Chamberlain,
M.P., Lord Privy Seal.

The Rt.Hon. The Viscount Birkenhead
Lord Chancellor.

The Rt.Hon. The Lord Lee of Fareham
G.B.E., K.C.B., First Lord of the Admiralty.

Admiral of the Fleet, Earl Beatty,
C.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O., D.S.O.,
First Sea Lord & Chief of the Naval Staff.

Lieut-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, G.C.B.
Secretary, Cabinet.

GREEK WAR-
SHIPS IN THE
DARDANELLES.

1. As a matter of urgency the First Lord of the Admiralty said that the Admiralty had just received a telegram from the Naval Commander-in-Chief (despatched at 9.37 a.m. and received at 4.40 p.m) to the effect that he was still stopping Greek men-of-war and transports from entering the Sea of Marmora.

The Admiralty wished to make sure that in this the action of the Naval Commander-in-Chief was in accord with the Cabinet's wishes.

Foreign Office telegram No.442 to Sir Horace Rumbold sent at 10.45 p.m. on September 28th. was somewhat obscure on this point. It was to the following effect :-

That Sir Horace Rumbold was to make an intimation to the Angora representative at Constantinople that in accordance with the spirit of the Paris Agreement we had hitherto prevented, and were still preventing, the entry of Greek....

Greek transports and men-of-war into the Marmora and Dardanelles. If, however, Mustapha Kemal did not withdraw from the neutral zone, the justification for this prohibition would no longer exist, and it would be withdrawn.

The Minutes of September 28th., 11 a.m., Conference of Ministers, Page 8, also did not help to clear up the situation, and appeared to require correction by the insertion of the word "not". The Secretary drew attention to Conclusion (c) of the Meeting of the Conference of Ministers on September 28th. at 7 p.m. which prescribed the action to be taken by the Foreign Office and was, in fact, in accord with Foreign Office telegram No.442.

The Prime Minister then read this conclusion.

On the suggestion of the Prime Minister the Conference agreed :-

- (a) That the Admiralty should inform the Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean to the effect that if Mustapha Kemal complied with the demand in War Office telegram No.91255, and the Turkish forces around Chanak were withdrawn from the neutral zone, the prohibition on the movements of Greek transports and warships into the Sea of Marmora should be maintained; but that if on the contrary the Turkish troops were not withdrawn, then the prohibition should be lifted and the Greek transports and warships should be allowed to enter the Sea of Marmora, the Greek authorities being informed. The Greek fleet should in any event not be expelled from the Sea of Marmora.
- (b) That the Secretary should examine the Minutes of the meeting on September 28th at 11.0 a.m. page 8, and make the necessary corrections.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.

30th September, 1922.