Meeting of the Cabinet to be held in the Prime Minister's Room at the House of Commons, S.W.1., on Friday, December 19th, 1925, at 11.30 a.m.

AGENDA.

1. THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY.
   (Reference Cabinet 31 (25) Conclusion 2).
   Summary of Evidence and Memoranda submitted to the Committee of Civil Research,
   (C.P. 462 (25) - already circulated).
   Extract from Minutes of Fifteenth Meeting of Committee of Civil Research,
   (C.P. 466 (25) - already circulated).

2. CASH ON DELIVERY.
   (Reference Cabinet 31 (25) Conclusion 1).
   Report of Committee,
   (C.P. 506 (25) - already circulated).

3. IRAQ. (IF REQUIRED).

4. WIRELESS OPERATORS' STRIKE.
   Memorandum by the Minister of Labour,
   (C.P. 507 (25) - already circulated).

5. TRADE BOARD POLICY.
   Conclusions of Cabinet Committee,
   (C.P. 530 (25) - to be circulated).

6. THE NEXT MEETING OF THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.
   Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs,
   (C.P. 532 (25) - to be circulated).

(Signed) M.P.A. HANKEY,
1 Gardens. Secretary, Cabinet.

December, 1925.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at the House of Commons, S.W.1., on FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16th, 1925, at 11.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. Stanley Baldwin, M.P., Prime Minister. (In the Chair).

The Right Hon. The Viscount Cave, G.C.M.G., Lord Chancellor.


The Right Hon. The Right Hon. Sir William Joynson-Hicks, Bart., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

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

The Right Hon. Sir Samuel Hoare, Bart., C.M.G., M.P., Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon. W. Guinness, D.S.O., M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.


The Right Hon. The Earl of Balfour, K.G., C.M.G., Lord President of the Council.


The Right Hon. L.S. Amery, M.P., Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. The Earl of Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India.

The Right Hon. Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, K.B.E., M.C., M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, Bart., M.P., Minister of Labour.


THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:


M.P.A. Hankey, G.C.B. _________________________________ Secretary.
The Prime Minister reported to the Cabinet, as a matter of urgency, that the offer which had been made to Local Authorities in Scotland in regard to houses, in accordance with the previous decision of the Cabinet, had not been taken advantage of sufficiently. He gave the Cabinet a comparison of the figures in regard to the houses built in Glasgow and Birmingham respectively under the various Government schemes. The net result was that, while Birmingham, with a slightly smaller population, had built 4,889 houses, Glasgow had only built 1,100.

The Cabinet agreed —

That, in order to stimulate the building of houses in Scotland, the Government should themselves provide 2,000 houses through the Scottish Housing Company.
The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum on the investigation made by General Laidoner's Mission under the Commission on behalf of the League of Nations on the Deportation of Christians in the neighbourhood of the Brussels line (Paper C.P.-531 (25)).

The Cabinet were informed that this Report was being printed as a Parliamentary Paper.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies gave his colleagues some account of the proceedings in regard to Iraq at the Council of the League of Nations at Geneva. He informed the Cabinet that the Council had declared that their decision in regard to the boundary would become definitive only after the British Government had submitted a new Treaty with Iraq ensuring the continuance of the mandatory regime for twenty-five years, unless at some earlier date Iraq was admitted as a member of the League. Although the Council had granted six months for the conclusion and submission of this Treaty, Mr Amery was most anxious to push on with the matter as rapidly as possible. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, he said, also desired this, and that Parliament should give its approval, in order that negotiations might be taken up with the Turks with a view to securing their acceptance of the new situation.

The precise question, therefore, on which Mr Amery asked for a decision was as to whether the House of Commons could be asked before prorogation to pass a resolution which would enable the Government to proceed with the conclusion of the Iraq Treaty before the re-assemble of Parliament, with a view to its acceptance at a specially summoned meeting of the Council of the League within the next few weeks.
The Cabinet were informed that the precedents appeared to justify the Government proceeding with the Treaty if the House of Commons had debated the question in general terms, and more especially if the House had passed an appropriate resolution.

Sir William Tyrrell, when consulted on the subject, stated that the Foreign Office requirements would be met sufficiently by a resolution passed by Parliament approving the actions and statements of the British representatives at the Council of the League.

After considerable discussion, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That — having regard to the fact that the debate on Iraq can take place only on the last full Parliamentary day of a very long Session, that the Leader of one of the Opposition Parties has already left London for a vacation and the Leader of the other will be leaving on Monday evening — it would not be fair to ask Parliament to approve in advance the new Iraq Treaty, and that an opportunity ought to be given for its discussion at the beginning of next Session:

(b) That a resolution should be moved in the House of Commons to the effect that the House approves the action taken and the statements of British policy in connection with Iraq by the representatives of His Majesty's Government at the recent meeting of the Council of the League of Nations at Geneva:

(c) That in the course of the Debate on Iraq on Monday, December 21st, the Prime Minister should make the statement contained in the Report of the Cabinet Committee of November 25th, 1925 (Paper C.P.–502 (25)) as amended by the Cabinet on December 3rd (Cabinet 57 (25) Conclusion 4(c)). The stage of the Debate at which this statement should be made was left to the Prime Minister, in consultation with the Secretary of State for the Colonies:

(d) That the question of whether the Debate on Iraq should precede or follow the discussion on the Lords' amendments in the House of Commons on Monday, December 21st, should be settled by the Prime Minister, in consultation with the Lord Privy Seal as Leader of the House of Lords:
(e) That the Secretary of State for the Colonies should have authority to proceed with the new Iraq Treaty with a view to its submission to Parliament at a very early stage of the next Parliamentary Session before its final ratification and submission to the Council of the League of Nations.

(f) That the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should have authority, when he deems fit, to take up negotiations with Turkey.

(g) That, in regard to Conclusion (f) of the 207th Meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence, in the event of an aggression by the Turks against Mosul during the Recess, the Secretary of State for Air should have authority to arrange for the despatch of Air reinforcements from India and Egypt, subject to the agreement respectively of the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for War (who stated that his agreement was subject to the consent of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, who, he had been informed in that room, had already been consulted). In any case of difference of opinion between the Secretary of State for Air and his colleagues, the question was left for the Prime Minister to decide.

(h) To approve the action of the Secretary, who had already informed the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, the Chief of the Air Staff and the Military Secretary at the India Office, that they were justified in acting on recommendation (g) of the Committee of Imperial Defence at the 207th Meeting, to the effect that a General Staff Officer should be sent to Iraq, since this Conclusion had not been specifically referred to the Cabinet for decision by the Committee of Imperial Defence.
3. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Minister of Labour in regard to the strike of wireless operators of ships (Paper C.P.-507 (25)), the information contained in which had been supplemented by the Minister of Labour at the previous Meeting of the Cabinet.

The Minister of Labour informed his colleagues that there might be a meeting of the two sides before Christmas, and that even if it was not settled it would peter out before very long.
4. After consideration of the Conclusions reached by a Meeting of the Lord Chancellor's Cabinet Committee on Trade Boards (Paper C.P., 530 (25)), the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That no case has at present been made out for applying the Trade Boards Acts to the non-licensed catering trade, the drapery and allied trades and the meat distributive trade, and that accordingly the Minister of Labour should be authorised to state that requests to apply these Acts to these trades in question will not in present circumstances be entertained:

"(b) As a corollary to the decision not to apply the Trade Boards Acts to the non-licensed catering trade, the decision should also be taken to take steps to deal with the hours and conditions of work (other than wages), in that trade if on further consideration they should appear to warrant it."

(c) That the Grocery Trade Board should be kept for the present in a state of suspended animation, and that the precise arrangements to be announced in regard to this Trade Board should be left to the Minister of Labour and the Lord Chancellor.

The Minister of Labour, while accepting these decisions, warned the Cabinet that they would meet with considerable Parliamentary criticism, though he was satisfied that contrary decisions would probably be criticised even more severely.
5. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs in regard to the next Imperial Conference (Paper C.P.—532 (25)).

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That a personal message should be sent by the Prime Minister to the Prime Minister of each of the Dominions, sounding them as to whether they would prefer that the next Imperial Conference should take place in 1926 or 1927, and, further, as to whether June or October was the more convenient month.

(b) That the drafting of the telegram should be arranged between the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs.
6. The Cabinet agreed —

That the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence on Reduction and Limitation of Armaments should be re-assembled to advise the Cabinet, through the Committee of Imperial Defence, as to the course to be followed as the result of the recent meeting of the Council of the League of Nations at Geneva.
7. The Cabinet had before them the following documents, prepared by the Committee of Civil Research, in regard to the application of the Iron and Steel Industry for an inquiry under the Safeguarding of Industries Procedure:

A Summary of Evidence and Memoranda submitted by the Committee of Civil Research (Paper C.P.—462 (25)).

An extract from the 15th Meeting of the Committee of Civil Research (Paper C.P.—466 (25)).

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Government ought not to agree to an inquiry under the Safeguarding of Industries procedure into the Iron and Steel Industries, unless it is prepared to adopt the recommendations of a Committee of Inquiry:

(b) That the evidence taken by the Committee of Civil Research points to the conclusion that the adoption of a tariff on imports of iron and steel would lead to applications from the numerous trades dependent upon steel and also from other branches of industry for similar treatment, and that, if these applications were approved, the net result would be construed by many people as a violation of the Prime Minister's electoral pledge that "a general tariff is no part of our programme":

(c) That, in these circumstances, the Prime Minister should announce in the House of Commons that the Government had decided not to grant the application of the Iron and Steel Industry for an Inquiry under the Safeguarding of Industries Procedure (Cmd.2327, Section 1, Rule 4):

(d) That the President of the Board of Trade should be authorised also to refuse an application he had received from a section of the Iron and Steel Industry included in the foregoing application for a separate inquiry:

(e) That the Committee of Civil Research and the Government Departments concerned should continue to keep the iron and steel trade under review, with the object of promoting its well-being by any of the measures recently discussed (e.g., by stimulating Home and Colonial Orders for railway material, etc.; by measures for
securing the "scrapping" of old merchant ships: or possibly by amalgamations and combined selling organisations), or by any other measures that may be deemed practicable and beneficial:

(f) That Ministers should observe entire reticence on this matter until the Prime Minister has announced the decision:

(g) That this conclusion should not be circulated until announced in Parliament.
8. The Home Secretary informed the Cabinet that he had received information that the situation in Northern Ireland had improved.
9. The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That a further Meeting of the Cabinet should be held on TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22nd, 1925, for the consideration of the Cabinet Committee’s Report on CASH ON DELIVERY.

The Report of the Cabinet Committee on ELECTRICAL DEVELOPMENT, and any other outstanding business:

(b) That Ministers who had made arrange­ments to leave London before that Meeting should not consider it necessary to attend unless they felt that they were specially concerned:

(c) That the Secretary of State for India, who was leaving London before Tuesday and was interested in Electrical Development, should be invited to attend a Meeting of the Attorney-General’s Committee on Monday, December 21st.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

December 18, 1925.