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Meeting of the Cabinet to be held at No. 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on WEDNESDAY, May 5th, 1926, at 11 a.m.

AGENDA.

1. THE INDUSTRIAL CRISIS.
   (a) Proposed Circular to Boards of Guardians respecting scales of relief during the Strike.
       Memorandum by the Minister of Health
       C.P. 184(26) - Already circulated.
   (b) Provision of meals to children by Local Education Authorities
       Memorandum by the President of the Board of Education
       C.P. 181(26) - Already circulated.
   (c) The Coal Crisis and re-organisation
       Memorandum by the President of the Board of Education
       C.P. 183(26) - Already circulated.

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

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
1st May, 1926.
MEETING of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1, on Wednesday, May 5th, 1926, at 11:00 a.m.

PRESIDENT:

The Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin, M.P.,
Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Balfour, G.C.V.O., C.B.
Lord President of the Council.

Mr., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

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

The Rt. Hon. W.C. Bridgeman, M.P.,
First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Rt. Hon. Neville Chamberlain, M.P.,
Minister of Health.

The Rt. Hon. Sir John Gilmour,
Bt., K.C., M.P., Secretary for Scotland.

The Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, Bt., M.P.,
Minister of Labour.

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, K.C.,
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

The Most Hon. The Marquess of Salisbury, K.G., C.M.G., C.B.,
Lord Privy Seal.

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

The Rt. Hon. Sir Laming Worthington-Evans, Bt., M.P., Secretary of State for War.

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

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

The Rt. Hon. Walter B. Guinness,
Bt., D.S.O., M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Eustace Percy,
M.P., President of the Board of Education.

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Peel, G.B.E.,
First Commissioner of Works.

The Rt. Hon. Sir Douglas Hogg,

The Rt. Hon. Sir W. Mitchell-Thomson, Bt.,

(For Conclusion 5).

Lt.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, G.C.B. Secretary.
1. The Prime Minister informed his colleagues that, in view of the failure of the Press, the King wished during the present industrial unrest to see one of His Majesty's Ministers daily.

Colonel Sir Ronald Waterhouse, the Prime Minister's Private Secretary, has undertaken to make the necessary arrangements.
2. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Minister of Health in regard to a circular which he proposed to issue in order to give some guidance to Boards of Guardians respecting scales of relief during the strike (Paper C.P.-194 (86)). The Minister of Health's proposal was that the best solution on the present occasion would be to direct the attention of Guardians to the rates of Unemployment Benefit as being appropriate to the ordinary case where the award of relief covers the man as well as the wife and the children and where no conditions of exceptional need are present. Where, however, the man is debarred from relief by reason of the Merthyr Tydfil Judgment, the ordinary Unemployment Benefit of 5/-s per week to the woman and 2/-s a week for each child would be inadequate. In these cases he proposed that where no conditions of exceptional need exist the woman and each child may receive a maximum of 12/-s and 4/-s per week respectively, and to defend those figures (1) by reference to the allowance of 12/-s per week ordinarily paid to an insured woman, and (2) as representing a rather more liberal payment than was found reasonable in 1921, when allowance is made for the fall in the cost-of-living figures since then.

The discussion showed that the main difficulty in this matter was to adjust the rates of relief in such a way that the families of men on strike should not receive more than those of men in receipt of Unemployment Benefit.
The general view was that the precedent of 1921 was very valuable, and the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the proposals of the Minister of Health in C.P.-184 (26).
3. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Education in regard to the provision of meals to children by Local Education Authorities during the present industrial unrest (Paper C.P.-181 (26)).

The proposal of the President of the Board of Education was that administrative action directed to individual Local Authorities, and concentrated upon those Authorities who appeared to be exceeding or abusing their powers, was preferable to the issue of any general circular, and that whenever such action was necessary the following condition of grant should be strictly insisted upon:

(a) The proper selection of children, with a view to the elimination of those who are not in fact necessary:

(b) Adequate co-operation with the Guardians and other relief agencies, including arrangements for the recovery of the cost which should properly be borne by such agencies:

(c) The elimination of any excessive expenditure.

The Cabinet approved the proposals of the President of the Board of Education as summarised above and set forth fully in C.P.-181 (26).
4. The attention of the Cabinet was drawn, as a matter of urgency, to an article which had appeared in a newspaper on the previous day which was tantamount to an invitation or an incitement to sympathisers with the general strike to cause "oscillation" and so to interfere with the circulation of Government information and notices by means of wireless broadcasting, which was contrary to the Regulation issued on May 3rd. under the authority of the Emergency Proclamation.

There was no difference of opinion in the Cabinet that, provided the Attorney-General was satisfied that the law had been violated, the Home Secretary should have authority to take appropriate action in regard to the said newspaper. There appeared to be some doubt, however, as to whether the newspaper in question had not ceased publication.

The Cabinet gave the Home Secretary and the Attorney-General, in consultation with the Prime Minister, full authority to take appropriate action against any newspaper that had transgressed the law.
5. The Cabinet discussed generally the emergency measures taken to deal with the situation created by the general strike.

The Cabinet were informed that racing had already been stopped. There was general agreement that cricket should not be stopped. The particulars of the latest information did not differ materially from the latest Strike Bulletin. As regards food prices the Cabinet were informed that satisfactory arrangements had been made by the President of the Board of Trade with the heads of the principal sections of the food trade in London in regard to prices, the only difficulty outstanding being with certain American interests who controlled the chilled beef trade.

The Prime Minister informed his colleagues that the letter of May 1st. from the Trades Union Congress General Council, offering to enter into arrangements for the distribution of essential foodstuffs (Cabinet 21 (26), Appendix II), had not been and would not be answered, but had been referred to by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his speech in the House of Commons on Monday, May 3rd. Reports were mentioned of the interruption of motor traffic in East London, and the most important question at the moment was felt to be to increase the number of Special Constables, and it was suggested that special efforts should be concentrated on the recruiting of young and vigorous men for this purpose.

The Secretary of State for War undertook to co-operate with the Home Secretary in stimulating the recruiting of Special Constables.

The suggestion was made that if the Government would make it abundantly clear that loyal Trade
Unionists would be guaranteed against victimisation by their Trades Unions; it would have a valuable effect.

The above matters were left to the Supply and Transport Committee, which was about to meet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
May 5, 1926.