SECRET.

CABINET 26 (26).

Meeting of the Cabinet to be held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1., on FRIDAY, May 7th, 1926, at 9.0 P.M.

AGENDUM.

THE INDUSTRIAL CRISIS.

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

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.,
7th May, 1926.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1. on FRIDAY, 7th May, 1926, at 9.0 P.M.

PRESENT:

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

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


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

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

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

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

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

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

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


The Right Hon. Sir Samuel Hoare, Bt., C.M.G., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

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

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

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

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

1. The Chancellor of the Exchequer read to the Cabinet the Report of the Cabinet Committee on a Civil Constabulary Reserve (Paper C.P.-187 (26)), which met with unanimous approval.

The Prime Minister informed his colleagues that he had received a letter from Lord Stamfordham expressing the King's concern at the evidence contained in official reports of intimidation of people ready and desirous of assisting the Government in the maintenance of law and order, and pointing out the desirability of all Police control being under the responsibility of one Executive Officer. It was pointed out that in paragraph (4) of the Cabinet Committee's conclusions (see below) provision was made that the tactical employment of the new Civil Constabulary Reserve should be under the Chief Commissioner of Police.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Secretary of State for War should explain to the King the arrangements in regard to the responsibility for the maintenance of law and order, and that Sir Ronald Waterhouse should be asked to arrange that Sir Laming Worthington-Evans should be the Minister to wait on His Majesty on the following day in accordance with the plan adopted at an earlier meeting (Cabinet 24 (26), Conclusion 1).

(b) To approve the conclusions of the Civil Constabulary Reserve Committee, which are as follows:

(1) That the Home Secretary should continue to swear in Special Constables on a voluntary basis to a total of 50,000.
That the Secretary of State for War should immediately order the headquarters of all territorial units actively to form companies of the Civil Constabulary Reserve, which will be a paid, whole-time force of sworn-in Special Constables organised in unit formations wearing plain clothes but supplied with brassards, steel helmets and truncheons. The administration of this force should rest exclusively with the War Office.

The Home Secretary should not recruit any paid Special Constables. He should release as soon as the emergency permits any territorial Special Constables who may wish to rejoin their own units.

The Secretary of State for War will for the next few days at any rate not recruit for the Civil Constabulary Reserve any outsiders, except ex-military men known and trusted at the territorial headquarters.

As soon as the Secretary of State for War notifies the Home Secretary that companies of the Civil Constabulary Reserve have been formed, the Home Secretary should be entitled to draw upon them as needed for the purpose of aiding the police. While these companies would act together as much as possible, their tactical employment will be directed by the Chief Commissioner of Police.

All the above applies to London, is urgent, and is to be acted upon forthwith upon the authority of the Cabinet.

In the Provinces the War Office will instruct the G.O.C.'s of the various Commands to issue the same orders to the territorial units, subject to such modifications as may be found necessary by the Expert Committee, and actively to promote the formation of Civil Reserve Companies. The terms of the instructions to the G.O.C.'s in C. to be agreed between the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for War. The G.O.C.'s will also be instructed to place themselves in communication with the county and borough police authorities, informing them that they are preparing these Forces and that as soon as they are ready they will be at their disposal in the case of emergency. Action in this case also should be immediate.

In a few days when we see how the situation develops and how the formation of the new Force proceeds, the question of whether the territorial centres should be allowed to recruit for the Civil Constabulary Reserve will be considered, and the Home Secretary will also consider whether he can release for full time service in the C.C.R. some of his present volunteer Special Constables.
(9) In the event of the embodiment of the Territorial Army, all the Territorials in the Civil Constabulary Reserve will immediately rejoin their units, lay aside their police status and resume military duty under the War Office. Outsiders who may have been engaged will revert to the Special Constabulary under the Home Office.

(10) An Expert Committee will assemble immediately to draw up the detailed terms of pay, etc., and to implement these general decisions.

(11) The provisional organisation set up by the Home Secretary under Generals Scott and Percy, with any arrangements with regard to depots, to be transferred to the War Office forthwith.
2. The attention of the Cabinet was called to many complaints received by Ministers and Members of Parliament as to the quality and nature of the news sent out by the British Broadcasting Company, the importance of which in informing public opinion had been greatly enhanced owing to the collapse of the Press; and the question was discussed as to whether control of the Company should in some form be exercised by the Government.

The question was felt to be bound up with the subject of the following Minute, and a decision was postponed.
3. The Attorney-General made a verbal progress report to the Cabinet regarding the work of the Cabinet Committee set up by the Cabinet decision referred to in the margin.

Attention was also called to the Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Paper C.P.-188 (26)).

A discussion followed. Suggestions were made for the guidance of the Cabinet Committee; but final decisions were postponed until the Committee had made further progress.

The next Meeting of the Cabinet was arranged for SATURDAY, MAY 8th, 6 p.m., at 10 Downing Street.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

May 9, 1926.