CABINET 58 (27).

Meeting of the Cabinet to be held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on Wednesday, November 16th, 1927, at 11.30 a.m.

ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA.

6. INQUIRY INTO THE STRENGTH AND ORGANISATION OF THE CAVALRY.

(Question to be raised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for War).

(Signed) T. Jones,
Deputy Secretary, Cabinet.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
15th November, 1927.
Meeting of the Cabinet to be held at 10,
Downing Street, S.W.1, on WEDNESDAY,
November 16th, 1927, at 11.30 a.m.

AGENDA.

1. FOREIGN AFFAIRS. (If required).

2. JUDICIAL VACANCIES.
   Memorandum by the Lord Chancellor.
   (C.P. 278 (27) - circulated herewith).

3. THE CONSTITUTION OF A FORCE OF 'ROLET' THE SPECIAL
   CONSTABLES FOR GENERAL SERVICE IN A CIVIL EMERGENCY.
   Joint Memorandum by the Secretary of State
   for Home Affairs and the Secretary of State
   for War.
   (C.P. 257 (27) - already circulated).

4. THE REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON MINING
   SUBSIDENCE.
   Memorandum by the President of the Board
   of Trade.
   (C.P. 269 (27) - already circulated).

5. THE CONSTITUTION OF BRITISH GUIANA.
   Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State
   for the Colonies.
   (C.P. 270 (27) - circulated herewith).

(Signed) T. JONES,
Deputy Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
14th November, 1927.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on WEDNESDAY, 16th November, 1927, 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. Sir Lamine Worthington-Evans, Bt., C.B.E., M.P., Secretary of State for War.

The Right Hon. Sir John Gilmour, Bt., D.S.O., M.P., Secretary of State for Scotland.

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

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

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


THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:


Mr. T. Jones........................................ Deputy Secretary.
The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Lord Chancellor (Paper O.P.-278 (27)) in which he proposed that, at the earliest date at which Parliamentary arrangements permitted, resolutions should be moved in both Houses for an Address praying for the appointment of the two additional Judges in the King's Bench Division allowed under the Judicature Act, 1910 (now Section 11 of the Supreme Court of Judicature (Consolidation) Act, 1925). The number of puisne Judges of the King's Bench Division had again fallen to 15, and a resolution for an Address was necessary to authorise the appointment of two Judges in order to restore the number to 17. Even with 17 puisne Judges there was but scanty, if any, margin to discharge the current business of the Courts. The operations of the Supreme Court of Judicature and its offices as a whole showed a surplus of revenue over expenditure, even including the salaries of the Judges, and in the view of the Lord Chancellor the first destination of this surplus should be to afford to litigants as prompt justice as could reasonably be attained.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) To authorise the Lord Chancellor to arrange that a resolution should be moved in both Houses of Parliament for an Address praying for the appointment of two additional Judges in the King's Bench Division:

(b) That every effort should be made to take the resolution before Christmas.
2. The Cabinet had before them a Joint Memorandum by the Secretaries of State for Home Affairs and War (Paper C.P.-257 (27)) on the subject of the constitution of a force of whole-time Special Constables for general service in a civil emergency.

The Home Secretary stated that he would be satisfied if arrangements could be made whereby the auxiliary police force could be put in command, when raised, of the force under the War Office responsibility, or equipped by the War Office, by loan or otherwise. There was no intention of enrolling a force at present, but only of making paper plans in readiness for any emergency.

The Secretary of State for War pointed out that the proposal now made by the Home Secretary was one which he thought could readily be arranged between the Departments.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Joint Memorandum by the Secretaries of State for Home Affairs and War (Paper C.P.-257 (27)) should be referred back to the Departments concerned for further consideration.
3. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade (Paper C.P.-269 (27)) on the subject of the Report of the Royal Commission on Mining Subsidence (Cmd. 2899). In his Memorandum the President of the Board of Trade stated that it was desirable that consideration should be given to the various recommendations contained in the Report, and, as several Departments were concerned, he suggested that an Inter-Departmental Committee should be set up, under the Chairmanship of the Secretary for Mines, consisting of representatives of the Lord Chancellor's Department, the Ministry of Health, the Mines Department, the Scottish Office, and also the Home Office if the Home Secretary considered this desirable.

The Cabinet agreed —

That an Inter-Departmental Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Secretary for Mines, consisting of representatives of —

The Lord Chancellor's Department,
The Ministry of Health,
The Mines Department,
The Scottish Office —

should be set up with the following Terms of Reference:—

"To consider the recommendations contained in the second and final Report of the Royal Commission on Mining Subsidence and to advise what action should be taken."
4. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State for the Colonies (Paper G.P.-270 (27)) on the subject of the need of a new Constitution in the Colony of British Guiana and the necessity of early legislation on the subject by the Imperial Government. The Memorandum contained the draft of a Bill to make Provision for the Government of British Guiana and its Dependencies, the introduction of which the Acting Secretary of State for the Colonies hoped the Cabinet would authorise at a very early date in 1928 so that the Royal Assent might be obtained not later than the Easter recess.

The Acting Secretary of State for the Colonies explained to the Cabinet that successive Colonial Secretaries for many years past had realised that the Constitution of British Guiana was one of the worst in the Empire. It dated from the Capitulations, when the territory was taken over from the Dutch in the Napoleonic Wars. The machinery of government provided no effective continuity either of financial or development policy. The Legislature was corrupt, and the indebtedness of the Colony was steadily increasing. Governors had repeatedly pressed that something should be done, and the recent Parliamentary Commission had reported that progress was impossible without Constitutional change. The legal advisers of the Colonial Office were of opinion that such change could only be brought about by an Imperial Act. It was therefore proposed to ask Parliament to grant powers which would place British Guiana on the same basis as the Gold Coast and other Colonies. Opposition
was to be expected from the elected members of the existing native Government in British Guiana. Speaking from personal experience of the Colony, the First Commissioner of Works and the Attorney-General strongly supported the proposed change.

The Cabinet agreed —

To authorise the introduction next Session of a Bill to make provision for the Government of British Guiana and its Dependencies, on the lines of the draft Bill set out at the end of Paper C.P.—270 (27).
IRAQ.

5. At the suggestion of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the Cabinet took advantage of the presence of the Acting Secretary of State for the Colonies to hear a short statement of the position of the negotiations which had been going on with King Feisal and his Ministers.

The Acting Secretary of State for the Colonies, having acknowledged the very great assistance he had received in the conduct of the negotiations from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the absence of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, stated that two very important points had been raised in the conversations. King Feisal and his Ministers wished to move further than His Majesty's Government were willing in the direction of greater freedom from the advice given through our High Commissioner. We had urged that our advice was essential in view of our responsibility to the League of Nations and to the world. We were held responsible for what went on in Iraq.

Our relations, while they were defined in the form of a Treaty, were nevertheless regarded as in the nature of a Mandate, and, that being so, we could not evade our responsibility but must offer advice and insist on its being taken.

The second important point related to defence. We had been trying to arrange a formula with King Feisal which would be acceptable to the Iraq Government, on the one hand, and, on the other, would neither disturb the Chancellor of the Exchequer nor raise opposition in the British Parliament. The main issue revolved round the announcement we had made that next year Iraq
must take full responsibility, in principle for external and internal defence. The result of our declaration had been that Feisal had determined on a policy of conscription and the raising of a large army. This step had been very unpopular among the Kurds, the tribes of the Euphrates, and others, but Feisal insisted that conscription was essential if he were to be responsible for defence. The Cabinet would realise that, until Iraq became a member of the League of Nations and we were released from our mandatory position and the conditions in regard to minorities were fulfilled, we should be regarded by the world as responsible for the external defence of Iraq. As long as the British Air Force was there, any external aggression against Iraq would be certain to involve that Force. Negotiations were proceeding with King Feisal with a view to discovering a formula which would define our respective responsibilities on a satisfactory basis.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer emphasized the importance of not committing the British Government to the defence of Iraq. In view of possible dangers, for example, from Turkey and Russia, which could not now be foreseen, we should take care not to undertake obligations which we might be quite unable to discharge.

In the course of the discussion it was explained that all Departments concerned, including the Treasury, were acting in close cooperation, and before any final decision was reached the subject would again come before the Cabinet.
The Cabinet agreed —

To appoint a Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, consisting of —

- The Lord Privy Seal (Chairman),
- The Chancellor of the Exchequer,
- The Secretary of State for Scotland,
- The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries,
- The First Commissioner of Works —

... to enquire and report what strength of Cavalry of the Line should be maintained in the British Army and how it should be organised.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
November 16, 1927.