CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on Monday, 10th January, 1944, at 5.30 p.m.

Present:

The Right Hon. C. R. ATTLEE, M.P., Deputy Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. ANTHONY EDEN, M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Right Hon. ERNEST BEVIN, M.P., Minister of Labour and National Service.

The Right Hon. HERBERT MORRISON, M.P., Secretary of State for the Home Department and Minister of Home Security.


The Right Hon. L. S. AMERY, M.P., Secretary of State for India and Secretary of State for Burma.

The Right Hon. Sir JAMES GRIGG, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

The Right Hon. THOMAS JOHNSTON, M.P., Secretary of State for Scotland (Item 6).


The Right Hon. LORD CHERWELL, Paymaster-General.

Mr. C. J. RADCLIFFE, K.C., Director-General, Ministry of Information (Item 5).

Marshal of the Air Force Sir CHARLES F. A. PORTAL, Chief of the Air Staff (Items 1-4).

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANDERSON, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. OLIVER LYTTELTON, M.P., Minister of Production.

The Right Hon. LORD WOOLTON, Minister of Reconstruction.

The Right Hon. VISCOUNT CRANBORNE, Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs.


The Right Hon. Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR, Bt., M.P., Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon. Sir STAFFORD Cripps, K.C., M.P., Minister of Aircraft Production.

The Right Hon. R. S. HUDSON, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries (Item 6).

The Hon. SIR ALEXANDER CADOGAN, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Items 1-4).

Admiral of the Fleet Sir ANDREW CUNNINGHAM, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff (Items 1-4).

Field-Marshal Sir ALAN BROOKE, Chief of the Imperial General Staff (Items 1-4).

Secretariat:

Sir EDWARD BRIDGES,
Lieutenant-General Sir HASTINGS L. ISMAY,
Mr. L. F. BURGIS.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minute No.</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Naval, Military and Air Operations</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Air Operations:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Home Theatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mediterranean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naval Operations:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shipping Losses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Military Operations:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bari</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loss of ships in harbour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proposed publication of Long Armistice Terms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Daily Worker’s request for the Accrediting of Correspondents to British Forces.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Reinstatement in Civil Employment</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. The Chiefs of Staff reported the principal events of the previous week.

Owing to bad weather, Bomber Command had only carried out one major attack, against Stettin, where great devastation had been caused. 120 Mosquito sorties had been made against other German cities.

Photographs taken on the 21st December showed that in the earlier attacks on Berlin some 3,000 acres had been devastated and enormous damage done to production factories, public utility companies and Ministries and public buildings.

"Crossbow" targets had been attacked in bad weather conditions.

United States bombers had attacked Kiel and Ludwigshafen and airfields in South-West France.

Coastal Command had attacked 14 U-boats. One was believed sunk and 5 others damaged. Enemy losses for the week, including claims by the United States Air Force, amounted to 165 destroyed and 43 probably destroyed. (The former figure included claims of 99 by the United States Heavy Bombers.) Allied losses amounted to 124, including 16 United Kingdom and 54 United States heavy bombers.

Air activity in Italy had been limited by the weather, but 5,000 sorties had been carried out against battle and strategical targets. Included in the latter were the ball-bearing factory at Turin and the torpedo factory at Fiume.

Confirmed shipping losses during the previous week, including belated reports, amounted to 18,153 tons.

Three blockade-runners had been sunk by United States forces.

E-boats had attacked a convoy of 15 merchant ships off Land's End on the 6th January. One escorting trawler and 3 merchant ships had been sunk.

Weather conditions on the Italian front had deteriorated considerably, but an advance of 2 miles had been made at San Vittore on a front of about 8 miles.

Considerable progress had been made during the previous week by the Russian Army in the Kiev Sector, especially in their main thrust towards Vinnitsa. A new offensive had resulted in the capture of Kirovograd and an advance of some 30 miles.

The War Cabinet—

Took note of these statements.

2. The War Cabinet were given further information regarding the loss of ships in Bari Harbour early in December as a result of enemy air action. A record of the discussion is contained in the Secretary’s Standard File of War Cabinet Conclusions.

3. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs gave the War Cabinet an account of a talk which he had had with M. Beneš, who had recently returned from Moscow. This is recorded in the Secretary’s Standard File of War Cabinet Conclusions.
4. On the 3rd January, 1944, the War Cabinet had invited the Chiefs of Staff to report whether there were still military objections to the publication of the Long Armistice Terms.

The War Cabinet now had before them a Memorandum by the Chiefs of Staff (W.P. (44) 15) stating that, in their view, on military grounds publication at present was undesirable.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that a telegram had been sent to General Eisenhower in the United States to obtain confirmation that he was still opposed to publication, but a reply had not yet been received.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that three of the objections to publication cited by the Chiefs of Staff seemed to him to be largely political, although no doubt they had a military aspect. In view of the Chiefs of Staff's opinion, he would not press for publication at this juncture, but he thought that the point would be pressed when Parliament met again.

The War Cabinet—

Took note of this statement.

5. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War (W.P. (44) 7).

The Secretary of State for War said that the Daily Worker had put forward the names of four correspondents for accrediting as correspondents to the British Forces. These had been refused on the grounds of their individual unsuitability. A point had now been reached at which he thought that it should be definitely decided that the Daily Worker should not be permitted to have accredited correspondents with His Majesty's Forces. If a decision in this sense was arrived at, then a statement to this effect should be made to the Daily Worker.

After a short discussion, the War Cabinet—

(1) accepted, in principle, the Secretary of State for War's proposal that the Daily Worker should not be permitted to have accredited correspondents;  
(2) invited the Secretary of State for War, in consultation with the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security, to formulate and submit to the War Cabinet the terms in which this decision should be conveyed to the Daily Worker.

6. The War Cabinet had before them the following Memoranda on the Reinstatement in Civil Employment Bill—

by the Home Secretary and Ministry of Home Security (W.P. (44) 6);  
by the Minister of Reconstruction (W.P. (44) 16);  
by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries (W.P. (44) 17).

The point at issue was whether the right of reinstatement under the Bill should be extended to whole-time volunteers in the Civil Defence, Police and Fire Services. This matter had been discussed* by the Reconstruction Committee, which had decided against such an extension.

The Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security said that he had set out the arguments in favour of this extension in detail in his Memorandum. Perhaps the main point was that reinstatement rights were possessed by men and women who had been called up under the National Service Act for duty in Civil Defence.

---

* R. (44) 1st Meeting.
“Forces.” To withhold these rights from whole-time volunteers would, he felt sure, give rise to bitterness and disappointment.

It had been argued that the extension of reinstatement rights to whole-time volunteers in the Civil Defence Services would mean that these rights would have to be extended to persons directed to employment in industry. He did not share this view, since he thought that public opinion would draw a clear line between industry and the Services (including Civil Defence).

The views of the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security were supported by the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Minister of Health.

The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries said that, in his view, women who volunteered for the Women’s Land Army had at least as strong a claim as members of the Women’s Services and Civil Defence personnel, and that there would be strong Parliamentary pressure for their inclusion in the Bill.

The Minister of Reconstruction said that reinstatement rights were generally identified in the public mind with service in the Armed Forces. It was true that these rights had been extended to the small proportion of persons in Civil Defence who had been conscripted to the Civil Defence Forces under the National Service Act of 1941. This was not the result of any deliberate decision of policy, but an incidental consequence of their having been called up under the procedure for call-up to the Armed Forces. The Reconstruction Committee had taken the view that, on balance, it would be wrong, merely because reinstatement rights were enjoyed by this relatively small number of Civil Defence personnel, to extend them to the whole body of volunteers in Civil Defence.

The Minister of Labour and National Service said that it was impossible to avoid some anomalies in this matter, and that his main object was to ensure a workable arrangement. The question of the Civil Defence Services had not been raised in his discussions with industry on this matter.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer pointed out that most members of the Civil Defence Services could look to being released when the war with Germany came to an end, and would therefore have an advantage as compared with members of the Forces.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer drew attention, however, to the following cases which might arise:

1. A man might have left a position in industry to become a whole-time volunteer in a Civil Defence Service. His place might have been taken by a man who had been subsequently called up for the Army. Under present arrangements, in such a case, reinstatement rights would attach not to the man who volunteered for Civil Defence but to the man who took his place.

2. The second case concerned a man who had left a post in industry to become a volunteer in Civil Defence and had later become a member of the Armed Forces. In such a case there was no value in the right to reinstatement in the last job occupied before entering the Army.

The Minister of Labour and National Service undertook to look into these instances. He also agreed that representatives of the Ministry of Labour and National Service and the Treasury should consult together as to any repercussions which the Reinstatement in Civil Employment Bill might have, by way of analogy, on Government employment.

The general view of the War Cabinet was that it was clearly difficult to define a satisfactory line of demarcation in regard to reinstatement rights, and that the position of whole-time members of the Civil Defence Services was no doubt somewhat anomalous. But, short of taking away existing rights from
conscripts in Civil Defence "Forces," discrimination between conscripts and volunteers in Civil Defence could not be avoided without creating other and more serious difficulties in other directions.

The War Cabinet—

Endorsed the view of the Reconstruction Committee that the provisions of the Reinstatement Bill should not be extended to whole-time volunteers in Civil Defence, and agreed that the position in this respect should be made clear to Parliament at an appropriate stage.

Offices of the War Cabinet, S.W. 1,
10th January, 1944.
THE PRESS

"Daily Worker's" Request for Accrediting of Correspondents to British Forces

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR said that he was satisfied that to accredit correspondents to the "Daily Worker" would not be consistent with security. The Communist Party were already trying to plant agents in the Army and had succeeded in planting members of their party in certain very secret organisations. He thought we ought to say quite flat-footedly that we were not prepared to allow the "Daily Worker" to have accredited correspondents.

MR. RADCLIFFE said that at the present moment the Ministry had no option but to treat the "Daily Worker" on the same basis as any other paper with a fairly considerable circulation. The "Daily Worker"'s application to have an accredited correspondent had come from the Newspaper Proprietors Association, of which Association the paper's proprietors were members. In the Ministry's view it was not open to them to deprive the paper completely of all normal press facilities on the grounds that the paper was not to be trusted. On the other hand they have never invited the Editor of the "Daily Worker" to any Ministerial Conference. Up till recently this latter position had been acquiesced in; but the "Daily Worker" had now complained that they had not been invited to the "CROSSBOW" Conference, held by the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR said that it might be relevant in this connection that he understood that General Eisenhower intended to do a good deal of work through Press Conferences.

THE HOME SECRETARY said it could perhaps be argued that, having raised the ban against the "Daily Worker", the paper must now be given all facilities. He agreed that the paper should be given all general facilities, but did not feel that the paper's representatives should also be admitted to intimate Ministerial Conferences. He thought that the Editor would feel under an obligation to pass on any information which he received to the Leaders of the Communist Party. On the merits of the case he was in agreement with the views expressed by the Secretary of State for War.

The question was then raised as to what reason should be given to the refusal to accredit correspondents. THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER thought that a reference to the Springhall case would suffice.

The suggestion was made that it might be possible to arrange for the accrediting of a correspondent whom the Government was prepared to trust.
THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, however, thought that this would lead to trouble in the Press.

After some further discussion the War Cabinet—

(1) Accepted, in principle, the Secretary of State for War's proposal that the "Daily Worker" should not be permitted to have accredited correspondents;

(2) Invited the Secretary of State for War, in consultation with the Minister of Home Security, to formulate and submit to the War Cabinet the terms in which this decision should be conveyed to the "Daily Worker".

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.