CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held in the Cabinet War Room, S.W. 1, on Monday, 4th September, 1944, at 5:30 p.m.

Present:
The Right Hon. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, M.P., 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 following were also present:
The Right Hon. LORD SIMON, Lord Chancellor (Item 9).
The Right Hon. L. S. AMERY, M.P., Secretary of State for India and Secretary of State for Burma.
The Right Hon. HUGH DALTON, M.P., President of the Board of Trade (Items 7–9).
The Right Hon. LORD CHERWELL, Paymaster-General.
Captain the Right Hon. H. H. Balfour, M.P., Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Air (Items 7–9).
Admiral of the Fleet Sir ANDREW CUNNINGHAM, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff.

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. LORD BEAVERBROOK, Lord Privy Seal.
Colonel the Right Hon. OLIVER STANLEY, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (Items 6–9).
The Right Hon. BRENDAN BRACKEN, M.P., Minister of Information.
Sir ORME SARGENT, Deputy Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Marshal of the Royal Air Force SIR CHARLES F. A. PORTAL, Chief of the Air Staff.

Field-Marshal SIR ALAN BROOKE, Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Secretariat:
SIR EDWARD BRIDGES.
General SIR HASTINGS L. ISMAY.
SIR GILBERT LAITHWAITE.
Mr. L. F. BURGIS.
### CONTENTS

<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>13</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>Flying Bomb</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>Home Theatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Military Operations—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northern France</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Southern France</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>Air Raids</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casualties and Damage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Crossbow”</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Date of Reassembly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting Place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Jewish Fighting Force</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Abolition of the Blackout</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Man-power and Production in 1944...</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>War Criminals</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. The Chiefs of Staff reported the principal events of the previous week.

Bomber Command had flown 3,100 sorties and dropped 8,155 tons of bombs by day and 2,103 by night on “Crossbow” targets, airfields in Holland, coastal batteries in France and targets in Germany.

65,850 tons of bombs had been dropped by Bomber Command during the month of August, this being the highest total in any month.

United States Heavy Bombers, whose operations had been restricted by the weather, had flown 2,750 sorties and dropped 3,600 tons of bombs.

The Allied Expeditionary Air Force had flown 12,400 sorties, attacking enemy road and railway movements. They claimed to have destroyed 2,895 motor transport vehicles, 170 armoured fighting vehicles, 35 tanks, 28 oil cars, 464 locomotives and 62 barges and other craft.

The German Air Force was almost completely disorganised by shortage of fuel and the rapid advance of our forces. The enemy had lost 93 aircraft (including 55 on the ground). Allied losses included 70 bombers and 78 fighters and fighter bombers.

363 flying bombs had been launched, of which 260 had been destroyed and 37 had reached the London area. No flying bombs had been launched since 11.15 p.m. on the previous Friday.

Allied aircraft had flown 12,500 sorties and dropped 9,000 tons of bombs. Enemy losses amounted to 283 aircraft as against 72 Allied.

Confirmed shipping losses due to enemy action for the month of August amounted to 88,336 tons; losses for September to date were 6,255 tons.

Eight U-boats had been sunk and 5 probably sunk during August.

There was evidence that the enemy was instituting inshore patrols off Moray Firth, in the Minch, off the North Channel and North Coast of Cornwall.

A series of operations had been carried out off the Norwegian coast. The Tirpitz had been attacked and a number of hits obtained. Subsidiary targets had also been attacked and more than 20 ships either destroyed or damaged.

Bad weather had restricted unloading operations in the Channel ports since the 2nd September. Dieppe had not been completely blocked and a thousand tons of stores had been unloaded at the port on the previous day.

The operations in Northern France were described. British forces had crossed the Somme near its mouth and were working along the coast towards Boulogne. Further inland a rapid advance had been made and Brussels had been taken. This force (which was making for Antwerp) had last been heard of at Alost. No news had been received of American forces since reaching Mons, Sedan, Metz and Nancy. The enemy garrison in Brest continued to hold out.

The continued advance of the Allied Forces in France was now mainly a question of overcoming administrative difficulties. The most critical stage in the supply of Paris had been overcome.

United States forces were east of Lyons, preparing for further advance. The railway line from the coast to Lyons was in good order.

On the right of our line an advance of some 20 miles along the sea-coast had been made in the direction of Rimini. On the remainder of the front there had been a general German retirement.

The Russians had made little progress north of Riga, but their attacks to the north of Warsaw had been held in check. Great progress had been made in Roumania. Ploesti and Bucharest had been occupied and the Danube reached on a wide front.

The War Cabinet—

Took note of the above statements.
2. The Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security said that the casualties as a result of attacks by flying bombs for the previous week had been as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Injury Level</th>
<th>Casualties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Killed</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriously injured</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly injured</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total figures to date were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Injury Level</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Killed</td>
<td>5,817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriously injured</td>
<td>17,984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly injured</td>
<td>22,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>45,763</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The War Cabinet—
Took note of this statement.

3. The Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security said that in the light of the changed situation he thought that certain new decisions were now called for. In particular, he recommended:

(a) that the scheme for the evacuation from London of further members of the priority classes should now be discontinued;

(b) that the movement of patients from London hospitals to hospitals in other parts of the country should be stopped.

(These points were in accordance with proposals he had received from the Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health.)

(c) that the basis on which the Rocket Consequences Committee had made their plans, and which had been revised the previous week, called for further review in the light of the increasing unlikelihood of this form of attack.

The War Cabinet—
Approved the action proposed by the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security.

4. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that he had received some further letters suggesting that Parliament should reassemble before the date fixed. He thought that we should adhere to the view that no change was called for in the arrangements already made.

This was agreed to.

5. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs inquired whether it could now be assumed that when Parliament reassembled it would meet in the House of Lords Chamber in the Palace of Westminster.

This was approved and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was invited to take the necessary action in concert with the authorities concerned.

6. The Prime Minister again referred to the question of a special flag for the proposed Jewish Fighting Force. The design proposed was the Star of David on a white background between two pale blue bars. The flag would only be flown with the Brigade and on operations. He had consulted President Roosevelt who favoured the proposal, which he wished to recommend to the War Cabinet for their approval.

The War Cabinet—
Approved the Prime Minister's proposal.
Abolition of the Blackout.

The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security (W.P. (44) 490) reviewing the position as regards the relaxation of the blackout in the light of the improvement in the war situation, and urging that if relaxations were made it would be desirable that they should be announced before British Double Summer Time ended, on the 17th September, 1944.

The Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security said that much the simplest course would be to allow the whole country to benefit at the same time and to the same extent. There were, however, security and practical arguments in favour of a distinction between London and the south-eastern counties and the remainder of the United Kingdom.

In the course of discussion it was urged that the case for avoiding discrimination against London and the south-eastern counties, which had been severely tried, was very strong. Admittedly the risk of further raids could not be wholly excluded, and there might be criticism from the areas affected in the event of a raid. This should, however, be set against the very great general relief which relaxation of the blackout would present. Rather than discriminate against London and the south-eastern area it would be better to postpone relaxation until it could be made of general application to the country as a whole.

It was urged on the other hand that it would be a pity to postpone relaxing the blackout at once where no further risk was involved.

The President of the Board of Trade said that in the event of a decision to relax the blackout on the lines recommended by the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security, immediate action should be taken to stop the manufacture of blackout material and switch to other production.

After further discussion the War Cabinet agreed as follows—

(1) An announcement should be made at an early date that the blackout would not be continued throughout the coming winter in any area in this country; and that stage by stage, as circumstances permitted, the following relaxations would be made:—

(a) The substitution of a dim-out for the blackout in respect of domestic lighting, on the lines set out in W.P. (44) 490.

(b) The relaxation of industrial and vehicle lighting on the lines recommended in W.P. (44) 490 and 417.

(c) The introduction of improved street lighting up to the standards recommended in W.P. (44) 490.

(2) The question of prosecution would, of course, be handled in a reasonable spirit.

(3) The President of the Board of Trade was invited, in the light of the above decision, to arrange for the diversion of capacity forthwith from the manufacture of blackout material to other types of material appropriate to the conditions which would prevail when effect had been given to those relaxations.

Man-Power and Production in 1944.

The War Cabinet were reminded that at their meeting on 14th August, it had been decided that revised estimates of manpower requirements for the second half of 1944 might be based on the assumption that the war with Germany would not continue beyond the 30th June, 1945.

The Minister of Production said that this decision had enabled some substantial cuts to be made in the allocations to the Supply Departments; but he suggested that the time had come when a more optimistic view might be taken.
The War Cabinet—

(1) Agreed that for the purpose of estimating man-power requirements in the second half of 1944, it could now be assumed that the war with Germany would not continue beyond the 31st December, 1944.

It was also suggested that steps should now be taken to switch some labour and productive capacity from war production to the production of articles for civil consumption—crockery, hollow ware, furniture, clothing and the like—now in very short supply.

*The President of the Board of Trade* said that the necessary plans and programmes had been prepared. What was now required was a decision for the diversion of the necessary labour and raw materials.

*The Minister of Production* said that the necessary arrangements could be made by the Ministers concerned acting in collaboration if the principle was approved by the War Cabinet.

The War Cabinet—

(2) Agreed that some diversion should now be made from war production to production of articles for civil consumption, and invited the Ministers concerned to take the necessary action to this end.

*The President of the Board of Trade* said that it would be of great assistance to him if the Supply Departments could now furnish him with particulars of the more important factory units at present engaged on war production which would be turned over to civil production early in Stage II.

The War Cabinet—

(3) Invited the Supply Departments to take steps to furnish this information to the Board of Trade as a matter of urgency.

*War Criminals.*

9. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (W.P. 44) 454) about a warning to neutrals against granting asylum to enemy leaders and war criminals. The matter had been considered in the summer of 1943 when the War Cabinet had felt that it would be premature to raise it. A stage had now been reached, however, at which a further authoritative pronouncement seemed desirable, at the highest level and on behalf of the three major Allies. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs recommended a joint Declaration in the terms of the draft annexed to W.P. 44) 484 by His Majesty's Government, the United States Government and the Soviet Government, and asked for authority to consult the United States and the Soviet Governments in this sense.

The general sense of the War Cabinet was in favour of the course recommended by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. In the course of discussion the following points were made:—

(a) The position of Quislings.—The War Cabinet took note that the words “accomplices in other countries” in paragraph 3 of the draft Declaration appended to W.P. 44) 484 sufficiently covered the position of Quislings.

(b) The suggestion was made that paragraph 5 of the revised draft should be omitted on the ground that it might be considered by neutrals as a threat to their independence and provoke embarrassing counter-declarations; and that the point would be sufficiently covered if after the word “retribution” in paragraph 4 of the draft Declaration the words “wherever they may be” were inserted.
The War Cabinet—

Approved the proposals of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in W.P. (44) 484, and agreed to the draft Declaration subject to the amendment at "X."

The Prime Minister said that he was increasingly impressed with the need for a very early Declaration, of the kind that he had previously urged, regarding the grand criminals whose crimes had no geographical location. He felt that the effect of such a Declaration might be of great value as dividing the Nazi leaders from popular feeling in their country. We need anticipate no difficulty with the Russians in this matter, and he would propose to discuss it personally with the President.

The Lord Chancellor said that with the Attorney-General and the Minister of Aircraft Production he had, as desired by the War Cabinet, been drafting a formula for this purpose. He undertook to let the Prime Minister have a copy of the draft at once.

Offices of the War Cabinet, S.W. 1,
4th September, 1944.