CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, SW.1, on Monday, 19th February, 1945, at 6.30 p.m.

Present:
The Right Hon. Winston S. Churchill, M.P., Prime Minister (in the Chair for Items 1-3).
The Right Hon. C. R. Attlee, M.P., Lord President of the Council (in the Chair for Items 4-6).
The Right Hon. Oliver Lyttelton, M.P., Minister of Production.
The Right Hon. Anthony Eden, M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Items 1-3).
The Right Hon. Ernest Bevin, M.P., Minister of Labour and National Service.
The Right Hon. Lord Woolton, Minister of Reconstruction.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. Viscount Cranborne, Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs.
The Right Hon. L. S. Amery, M.P., Secretary of State for India and Secretary of State for Burma.
The Right Hon. Sir Archibald Sinclair, Bt., M.P., Secretary of State for Air.
The Right Hon. Brendan Bracken, M.P., Minister of Information.
The Right Hon. Lord Cherwell, Paymaster-General.

Field-Marshal Sir Alan Brooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Colonel the Right Hon. Oliver Stanley, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.
The Right Hon. Sir James Grigg, M.P., Secretary of State for War.
The Right Hon. Sir Stafford Cripps, K.C., M.P., Minister of Aircraft Production.
The Right Hon. Richard Law, M.P., Minister of State.
Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Charles F. A. Portal, Chief of the Air Staff.
Vice-Admiral Sir E. Neville Syfret, Vice-Chief of Naval Staff.

Secretariat:
Sir Gilbert Laithwaite.
Major-General L. C. Hollis.
Mr. L. F. Burgess.
## WAR CABINET 22 (45).

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The Deputy Prime Minister welcomed back the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on behalf of the War Cabinet, and congratulated them on the results which they had achieved. The Prime Minister thanked the Deputy Prime Minister on behalf of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and himself, and gave the War Cabinet his impressions of the Conference and of the discussions that had taken place during and after it. A record of the discussion is contained in the Secretary's Standard File of War Cabinet Conclusions.

The Prime Minister suggested that the Leader of the House should announce on the following day that the Government would be ready to give two days next week for a Debate on the Crimean Conference, and that the actual form in which the matter should be brought before the House would be announced later. He added that, in his judgment, Parliament should be asked formally to associate itself with the proceedings and outcome of Conferences such as that which had just taken place.

The War Cabinet—

Approved the Prime Minister's suggestion at "X" and invited the Leader of the House to make a statement on these lines the following day.

The Prime Minister referred to the discussion in the War Cabinet on the 13th February, 1945, on Gratuities for the Civil Defence Services, the Women's Land Army, &c. He asked for further information as to the probable cost of giving effect to the conclusions then reached, and as to the urgency of the matter.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer explained that the estimated cost, on the basis approved by the War Cabinet, was of the order of £7½ million. Gratuities would be confined to whole-time service and would be at three-quarters of the rate applicable to the fighting services. In the case of the Women's Land Army a different basis of recognition had been proposed, the details of which were still being worked out, with the result that he was not yet in a position to give an estimated figure of cost. The general outline of the scheme was, however, that members of the Women's Land Army would receive, on ending their service, a good outfit allowance, and that for those who were willing to stay after the end of the war with Germany, there should be a bonus based on their service prior to that date. These were essentially resettlement payments to help the individuals concerned to re-establish themselves.

The Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security said that the Trade Union side of the Civil Defence Services Joint Consultative Committee had been pressing for a meeting to discuss the question of gratuities to the Civil Defence Services, and that a meeting, in view of the recent discussion in War Cabinet, had been fixed for to-morrow morning. He was quite clear himself that the benefits in view must be in respect of whole-time service only. He asked whether the War Cabinet agreed to his proceeding with his arrangements.

The Prime Minister thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security for the information they had given him and said that he was quite satisfied, in the light of it, that the arrangements already made should stand.
4. The Chiefs of Staff reported the principal events of the previous week.

Bomber Command had flown 3,615 sorties and dropped 8,000 tons of bombs. The attack on Dresden had practically wiped out the city. Mosquitoes had attacked Berlin, Bagdeburg and other targets in Germany.

United States bombers had flown 3,900 sorties and dropped 8,400 tons of bombs.

The Tactical Air Force had flown 15,000 sorties and dropped 8,500 tons of bombs. They claimed to have destroyed 52 tanks and 5,000 other vehicles.

Allied losses for the week had been 77 bombers and 81 fighters and fighter-bombers. The enemy had lost 63 aircraft.

Nine thousand two hundred sorties had been flown and 7,100 tons of bombs dropped for the loss of 58 aircraft.

No ships had been lost by enemy action during the previous week. The confirmed losses from this source during February amounted to 25,020 tons.

There had been U-boat activity off Kola Inlet and in the Gibraltar area during the week. In addition a number of attacks against U-boats had been carried out north of the Shetlands. Four U-boats had been sunk and 2 probably sunk.

A convoy of 27 ships had arrived in Kola Inlet on the 13th February. During the passage from the United Kingdom 7 enemy aircraft had been destroyed, 7 probably destroyed and 4 damaged for the loss of 2 fighters and one pilot.

On the 15th February, 3 destroyers had successfully evacuated 500 of the civilian population from Soroy Island (north-west Norway) to Kola Inlet.

During recent patrols in the Malacca Straits H.M. Submarines Subtle and Tantivy claimed to have sunk 4 junks and 2 coasters and to have scored 3 probable hits on a convoy.

In the north Field-Marshal Montgomery’s offensive had advanced from 4 to 5 miles on a 25-mile front in very bad going. Opposite Aachen, United States forces had made small but important progress.

The island of Ramree had now been cleared. Our forces had also made a landing west of An. In the operations against Mandalay, two crossings of the Irrawaddy had been made.

The Americans had made landings on the island of Luzon at Balor and Lingayen Bay which had the effect of cutting the island in two. A landing had also been made at Corregidor Island.

In the Konigsberg area, small progress had been made and some towards Danzig. Poznan had almost been cleared. The major advance of the week had been made west of the Oder towards Cottbus and Gorlitz. In front of Budapest the Germans had made a counter-attack East of Komarno which had slightly driven back the Russian line.

The War Cabinet—

Took note of these statements.

5. On the 12th February the War Cabinet had decided that Field-Marshal Montgomery should be communicated with regarding the issue of a statement about the predominantly British character of the First Canadian Army. The Secretary of State for War now reported that the Field Marshal had felt that this could best be arranged by making the facts known to the war correspondents at the front.

The view was expressed that the effect of the action taken was less marked than could be wished. The B.B.C., too, had continued to emphasise the Canadian contribution to the offensive. The Minister of Information undertook to take this aspect of the matter up with the B.B.C.
Attacks by Rockets and Flying Bombs

(Previous Reference: W.M. (45) 15th Conclusions Minute 2.)

6. The Home Secretary and the Minister of Home Security informed the War Cabinet that during the previous week there had been 78 incidents from long-range rockets. Of these, 26 had occurred in London, 36 in Essex, 8 in Kent, 2 in Hertfordshire, 1 each in Buckinghamshire and Suffolk and 4 in the sea. The casualties for the week had been 165 killed, 390 seriously injured, 1,079 slightly injured and 3 missing.

There had been no flying-bomb incidents during the period.

The War Cabinet—

Took note of the statement of the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security.

Offices of the War Cabinet, S.W. 1.
19th February, 1945.
THE PRIME MINISTER referred to a recent ruling by the Speaker as to the use of the terms "lies and liars" in the House. He thought that that ruling, and the application of it by the Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means (Major Milnor) opened a new and dangerous door. He had it in mind to write a letter to the Speaker, setting out the arguments which weighed with him.

The War Cabinet -

Took note with approval of the Prime Minister's intention.

THE PRIME MINISTER enquired whether there was anything in the alleged claim by the World Trade Union Congress to be represented at the San Francisco Conference.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR thought that Sir Walter Citrine might press this, but had no information beyond what had appeared in the press.

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