The attached Report, which embodies the agreed conclusions of the Meeting of the Sub-Committee of the Home Policy Committee on Rationing on the 21st October, is, in accordance with the procedure approved at the Meeting, circulated by the Chairman of the Sub-Committee for consideration by the Home Policy Committee at their meeting on Wednesday, 25th October, at 10.0 a.m.

Richmond Terrace, S.W.1.,
23rd October, 1939.
1. At their meeting on the 11th October, 1939 the Home Policy Committee appointed a Sub-Committee composed as follows:

- The Minister of Food (In the Chair),
- The First Lord of the Admiralty,
- The Secretary of State for War,
- The Secretary of State for Air,
- The Secretary of State for Scotland,
- The President of the Board of Trade,
- The Minister of Health,
- The Minister of Labour,
- The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries,
- The Minister of Economic Warfare

to examine and report to the Committee generally on the amount of the civilian rations proposed in the Minister of Food's memoranda, and also on the question whether having regard to the experience of the Great War it might not be practicable to reduce the amounts earmarked for the Fighting Services of the five foodstuffs to be rationed, with a view so far as possible to eliminating waste.

(The Minister of Shipping was subsequently added to the sub-Committee).

The Sub-Committee have held two meetings and closely examined the estimates upon which the original rationing proposals set out in Paper No. H.P.C.(39) 39 were based.

REVISED QUANTITIES.

2. The supply situation has improved during the last fortnight. Exports from Denmark have been resumed and a contract has been concluded for the supply of meat from the Argentine for the period up to 31st January, 1940.

3. The Sub-Committee is of opinion that it is not practicable at the present stage to fix the quantity of the ration to be allowed over a long period. Attention has, therefore, been directed mainly to the anticipated supply position during the three months 1st November, 1939 to 31st January, 1940.

French Army Requirements.

4. During this period it is hoped that the requirements of the French Army may be met by the allocation of 51,000 tons of frozen meat out of the 200,000 tons to be shipped from the Argentine under the contract just concluded. This will leave 149,000 tons for the United Kingdom which is equal to normal exports during this period of the year.

Service Requirements.

5. The Sub-Committee has been furnished with the result of an enquiry by a special Committee set up by the Secretary of State for War (i) to consider the possibility of reducing Army and Air Force requirements by dividing the Army into categories based on dietary needs, and (ii) to submit revised estimates of Army and Air Force requirements during the next six months. It has been found impracticable to differentiate between various branches of the Army and Air Force according to occupation. A similar attempt made in the Great War met with the same result. The War Office Committee has, however, recalculated the requirements of the Army and Air Force on the assumption that the meat ration of the Forces at home could be reduced from 12 to 10 oz. a day and the bacon ration from 2 oz. to 1 3/7 oz. a day. If this is done the approximate savings
would amount to 69,000 tons of meat and 10,000 tons of bacon a year. If this reduction is made the monetary value of the ration would be reduced by a penny. It has been estimated that to replace with other foodstuffs the loss of nutritive occasioned by the proposed cut in meat and bacon would cost a gross 3d or allowing for the ld per day saved on meat and bacon a nett 2d per day. Each penny increase in the cash ration costs £1\(\frac{1}{2}\) million for one million men per year.

6. The Sub-Committee in calculating the quantity of meat which is likely to be available for the civilian population have proceeded on the assumption that the War Cabinet will approve of the reduction in the meat and bacon ration to the Forces at home which are mentioned in the previous paragraph. It has further been assumed that no reduction will be made in the per capita ration for the Navy or of troops on active service overseas.

7. The Sub-Committee is of opinion that commanding officers in the Army and Air Force should be asked to exercise general surveillance of the utilisation of food supplies by their men, and not to draw full rations if the men were not requiring and in fact were not consuming the full authorised ration. If arrangements were made for such savings to be made available for civilian consumption, the effect might be of great value especially if later in the war the general supply position were to deteriorate.

8. The Sub-Committee is of opinion that if the measures outlined in paragraphs 5-7 above are adopted, there would be no reason to anticipate any general criticism of the comparison between the amount of the Service rations and that of the civilian ration.
9. The Sub-Committee, in addition to taking account of the reduced allocations referred to in the preceding paragraphs, has made several further substantial changes in the calculations on which the original proposals were based. These may be summarised as follows:

(a) It has been assumed that the arrivals from overseas will be normal up to 31st January, 1940 and no specific deduction has been made for sinkings or delays now that the convoying of ships is in operation;

(b) The quantity to be put to reserve has been reduced to an amount sufficient for a working reserve, leaving the stock on the hoof as the reserve against any prolonged interruption in the arrival of supplies from overseas;

(c) No provision has been made for extra rations for Heavy Workers or Adolescent Boys.

10. With regard to (c) the Sub-Committee were informed (i) that Sir Walter Citrine had been consulted and had expressed the opinion that the Trade Union Congress would be opposed - at any rate at this stage - to discrimination between one class of worker and another and (ii) that medical opinion did not endorse the original proposal to give an additional ration either to heavy workers or adolescents.

11. The effect of the above alterations which the Sub-Committee recommend should be adopted is that it is estimated that 395,000 tons of meat will be available for civilian consumption in the three months 1st November 1939 - 31st January 1940. Allowing for children up to six years of age being provided with a 50% ration of meat (but an adult's ration of other foodstuffs) the available supplies will be equal to 29 oz.\(^*\) for each adult per week and 14\(\frac{1}{2}\) oz. for each child. As, however, it is necessary to express

\(^*\) The comparable amount for the succeeding three months (i.e. 1st February to 30th April, 1940) is 24 oz., but it is not possible to calculate the quantity accurately until further information is available as to the possibility of increasing imports during that period.
the meat ration in terms of value instead of weight the
Sub-Committee recommends that the ration should be, at
the outset, 2/- for each adult, and 1/- for each child
under 6 years of age. On the average these sums will
purchase more than 29 oz. and 14½ oz. respectively, but
the Sub-Committee sees no objection to this because many
less well-to-do families will not be in a position to
purchase the full meat ration which is above the average
level of consumption.

12. The supply position of bacon and butter during the
next three months will depend very largely on arrivals from
Denmark. Imports will, it is expected, be increased later
from the Empire and other countries. The home production
of bacon will also, it is anticipated, be expanded. The
supplies from all sources at present in sight would enable
a ration to be provided of 4 oz. of bacon per week and
4 oz. of butter per week. It should be possible to
maintain these quantities provided Danish imports continue.

13. In view of the recent acute shortage of butter,
consequent on the cutting off of Danish supplies as well
as the delay in the arrival of imports from Australia and
New Zealand, the manufacture of margarine which is now

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under the control of the Ministry of Food has been raised in recent weeks to 50% above normal. This level of production equal to 4 oz. per head of the population can be continued provided that the import of the necessary raw materials is maintained and that the manufacturing capacity is not reduced by aerial attack. In these circumstances the Sub-Committee recommend that margarine should not be rationed at the outset. If, however, the shortage of butter supplies should lead to the demand for margarine being increased beyond the available supply, it will be necessary to impose rationing.

14. The same applies to cooking fats the present supply of which — equivalent to 3 oz. per head per week — is understood to be approximately equal to normal consumption.

15. The supply position of sugar is at present favourable and would enable a ration to be allowed of 1 lb. per head, which is twice as much as the present German ration and twice as much as was allowed in Great Britain in 1918. The favourable position has caused the Sub-Committee to consider carefully whether in existing circumstances it is necessary to ration sugar at all. The majority of members recommend that sugar should be rationed but the Minister of Health and the Secretary of State for Scotland desire to give the matter further consideration.
16. The facts with regard to present and future supplies of sugar together with some other considerations which should be taken into account in reaching a decision whether sugar should be rationed or not are set out in the Appendix to this Report. One of the most important factors is that home production when added to the Empire supplies, which have recently been purchased under a favourable contract, will not be sufficient to provide for home consumption and essential exports (to Eire, Mediterranean etc.) for more than 9 months' normal consumption. If consumption were to continue at the level of the last two months, the supplies would last for a considerably shorter period than 9 months.

Purchases of foreign sugars will, in any case be necessary. At present their price is entirely out of relation to the basis at which Empire sugars were recently purchased. If it is known that supplies already "in sight" are being rapidly consumed there will be no prospect of a reduction of price for foreign sugars and they may eventually have to be purchased at a price greatly in excess of the agreed Empire price. The result of the non-rationing of sugar may, therefore, be (1) to increase the demand for shipping tonnage; (ii) to antagonise Empire producers from whom supplies have already been purchased; and (iii) increase the cost of sugar throughout the war.

17. The majority of the Sub-Committees accordingly recommend that a ration of 1 lb. per head per week be imposed but that for the present at any rate, no attempt should be made to ration the serving of sugar to customers in hotels, restaurants and catering establishments. If this course is adopted, the Sub-Committee understands that
the available supplies will be sufficient to permit of allocations being made to manufacturers on approximately their pre-war consumption plus a margin for season and special demands. As regards the sugar requirements of the Services the Sub-Committee have been informed that the War Office consider that the service ration should be reduced to 3oz. per day. The Sub-Committee concurs in this proposal.

WHY RATIONING IS CONSIDERED NECESSARY.

18. As will have been seen from the preceding paragraphs the Sub-Committee has given consideration to the need for rationing each of the various foods which have been under discussion. In the case of butter and bacon supplies are considerably below normal and rationing is the only means of securing equitable distribution of the supplies available. It is understood that grocers, generally speaking, are desirous that the rationing of these two foods and of sugar (which has been dealt with in some detail in paragraphs 16 and 17 and the Appendix) should begin as quickly as possible. The Ministry of Food is being subjected to a considerable amount of criticism in Parliament and the Press because rationing has not already been imposed. Retailers are experiencing considerable difficulty, in the absence of rationing, in satisfying the requirements of customers in respect of bacon, butter and sugar. These difficulties have been greatly increased by the recent re-distribution of population which has rendered the allocation of supplies by wholesalers to retailers on the basis of pre-war purchases unsuited to present conditions.

19. The position with regard to meat is somewhat different. The total supplies available are, at present, equal to normal. But the allocation of increased supplies to the Services results in a considerable reduction
in the quantity available for civilian consumption. Moreover the Services are supplied with imported meat with the result that instead of imported and home produced supplies available for civilians being approximately equal in quantity, as they are normally, they will during the three months 1st November 1939 to 31st January 1940 be in the proportion of about 35 to 65. The shortage of imported (being the cheaper) supplies is causing considerable difficulty in working class areas and also in the manufacturing industry (sausages, meat pies, etc.). Rationing would overcome these difficulties because imported and home produced supplies would be "pooled" as in the Great War and sold at an average price.

20. Rationing of the individual consumer involves a close control over supplies. As home produced fat stock reach the market in thousands of different centres, an elaborate and complicated scheme is necessary to enable the Ministry of Food to purchase all such stock and allocate meat supplies through wholesalers to every retail butcher. A scheme similar in broad outline to the one which is at present in an advanced stage of preparation was operated in the Great War and on the whole it worked reasonably smoothly. It is, however, inevitable that there will be some difficulties and criticisms when the scheme is put into operation as it is necessary to regulate the markets to which farmers can bring their stocks and also to restrict substantially the number of slaughter-houses to be used. The Sub-Committee accordingly recommends that the Ministry of Food should be authorised to give the scheme a "trial-run" for a fortnight before the date when individual consumers will be able to obtain rationed meat only in return for a coupon.
COMPARISON WITH GERMAN RATIONS.

The following table gives a comparison of the above proposals with the rationing system in Germany introduced on 25th September (which superseded a previous temporary system) and is intended to continue for the duration of the war.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United Kingdom Proposals</th>
<th>German System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of 29 oz., sausage, pies, offals sausage, offals, being outside the ration.,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 oz.</td>
<td>Included in meat ration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 oz.</td>
<td>2½ oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margarine and Cooking fats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not to be rationed</td>
<td>4½ oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lard, fat bacon and tallow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not to be rationed</td>
<td>2½ oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 oz.</td>
<td>9 oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not to be rationed</td>
<td>3½ oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do.</td>
<td>2½ oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do.</td>
<td>5½ lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No full milk for ordinary consumers only skimmed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Later information indicates that each consumer may have 6 oz. of butter or 4 oz. of margarine but not both.

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DATE OF INTRODUCTION.

22. For various reasons it will not be possible to arrange for the issue of rationing books, based on the National Register schedules, to be completed before 1st November, assuming that the War Cabinet gives approval on 25th instant. An interval must be allowed for the books to be re-addressed and delivered to persons who have changed their address since National Registration Day and have not already given notification of the change; for all consumers to register with retailers of their choice; for each retailer to inform his Food Control Office of the number of his registered customers; and for this information to be passed to the selected wholesalers. It is accordingly considered that rationing could not be brought into operation for any commodity before Monday, 20th November.

23. Although there is an interval of four weeks between now and the 20th November, rationing could not be brought into force on the latter date unless decisions are taken at once so as to enable the essential administrative arrangements to be proceeded with. Moreover, it is very important that adequate time should be available to enable the case for rationing and for the particular measures decided upon to be properly presented to the press and the public. So far little progress has been made as regards publicity because, in the absence of decisions, it has been impossible to present a sufficiently clear picture of the Government's intentions.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

24. The Sub-Committee recommend that the War Cabinet should be asked to approve the following proposals:
Services.

1. That the meat ration for the Army and Air Force troops at home be reduced from 12 to 10 oz. of meat per day and from 2 oz. to 1 3/7 oz. of bacon per day.

2. That the Army and Air Force troops should be entitled to draw up to 3 oz. a day of sugar, (the present standard ration is 1 1/2 oz. per day; but this is increased to 3 or 4 oz.)

3. That attention be drawn to the War Office estimate that, fully to compensate for the reduction in the meat and bacon ration recommended under (1) above, would require a net increase of 2d a day in the cash portion of the ration.

4. That no alteration be made in the rations for the Navy or the Army and Air Force on active service overseas.

5. That all commanding officers be asked not to draw full rations if their men are not requiring and in fact not consuming the full authorised ration; and that arrangements should be made to ensure that any savings thus effected are made available for civilian consumption.

Civilians.

6. That rationing of some commodities should be put into operation at an early date.

7. That with this object the Food Control Committees should be instructed to begin issuing Rationing Books forthwith with a view to completing the issue as soon as practicable.

There was no reason why the posting of the Ration Books should not commence on 26th October.
8. That in view of the fact that the meat ration, when it is imposed, will, under the proposals set out in this Report, be considerably larger than any meat ration in force in the Great War, it is not necessary to contemplate at present supplementary rations being given to:

Heavy workers, and Adolescents.

9. The rationing Documents to be issued are, therefore, to be restricted at the outset to:

(1) Persons over 6 years of age.
(2) Children under 6 years of age,

the rations of the latter being 50% of the adult meat ration for persons over six years of age but identical as regards the other commodities.

10. That it is unnecessary at the outset to ration either:

Cooking Fats, or Margarine.

11. That whether it hereafter becomes necessary to ration these commodities, should depend on whether the demand for them increases considerably consequent on the shortage of butter.

12. That the Minister of Food should be authorised to impose the rationing of:

Sugar
Butter, and Bacon,

either separately or all at one date whenever the administrative arrangements are ready.

13. That the Minister of Food should make every effort practicable to ensure that the quantity of the ration at the outset should not be less than:

Sugar - 1 lb. per head per week.
Butter - 4 oz.
Bacon - 4 oz.

14. That sugar consumed in hotels, restaurants and catering establishments should be free from rationing.

* The recommendation in the case of sugar is not unanimous. (See Paragraph 15).
15. That as regards meat, the Minister of Food should be authorised in view of the necessarily complicated nature of the distributive arrangements, to invite the public to carry out a trial rationing scheme on a voluntary basis for, say, a fortnight before the ration is imposed, that is —

(a) Consumers would be asked to register with the butcher to whom they would be "tied" when rationing begins, and to restrict their purchases of rationed meat to their registered butcher; and

(b) Consumers would also be asked to limit their purchases of rationed meat to 2/- per head per week.

16. That steps should be taken at once to prepare the public for developments along the lines above indicated.

(INTI) W.S.M.
Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

23rd October, 1939.
APPENDIX.

SUGAR SUPPLIES AND RATIONING.

1. The following table shows the quantity of raw sugar which arrived in the United Kingdom in each of the four successive weeks up to 7th October and the quantity melted and the total stocks held.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week ended</th>
<th>Arrivals</th>
<th>Total melted (including direct consumption raw sugar)</th>
<th>Total Stocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 16</td>
<td>25,557</td>
<td>63,602</td>
<td>269,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; 23</td>
<td>32,159</td>
<td>69,097</td>
<td>245,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; 30</td>
<td>29,188</td>
<td>59,274</td>
<td>234,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Octr. 7</td>
<td>55,741</td>
<td>49,170</td>
<td>233,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. During these four weeks Government reserve stocks fell from 122,929 tons on 16th September to 83,000 tons on 7th October. Also arrivals during the week ended 7th October included 4,000 tons of home-grown sugar beet.

3. Stocks actually in the country or in sight amount to 1,877,000 tons of sugar (raw value) which is equivalent to ten months' supply on normal pre-war basis excluding exports. Sugars "in sight" are made up of 279,000 tons raw afloat, 835,000 tons raw purchased, but not yet shipped, and the estimated balance of the home-grown crop 530,000 tons.

But these figures are not as good as they appear because:

(a) Exports cannot be excluded. Apart from the desirability of maintaining exports as a matter of general policy, supplies must be provided for the Mediterranean, West African and other Colonies which are likely to absorb about 2,500 tons monthly. There is a further potential demand from Eire, Malaya and British India which it is difficult to estimate. Exports to all countries in pre-war years represented about 350,000 tons of white sugar.

(b) Home-grown beet sugar production will cease in January. After that there is at this moment no sugar actually contracted except the B.W.I. and other Empire Sugars which will come in at the rate of only about 30,000 tons weekly. At the appropriate time steps will be taken to buy non-Empire sugars. Their price at present is entirely out of relation to the basis of
7/6d. per cwt. at which Empire sugars were bought and, if there is any suspicion that supplies in the United Kingdom are short it will be impossible to buy at a reasonable figure. To be driven to buy non-Empire sugars at prices greatly in excess of the agreed Empire price would not only involve heavy expenditure, but would antagonise the Empire producer and jeopardise the prospects of making favourable Empire contracts for the 1940 crops in Queensland, South Africa, Mauritius and Fiji, and the 1941 crops in the B.W.I. If, when the time comes, it is found necessary to buy non-Empire sugars at prices markedly in excess of the 7/6d. per cwt. basis, it will be of some assistance to be able to say to the Empire producer that, through rationing, all reasonable economy in the utilisation of Empire and home supplies has been exercised.

(c) There can be no certainty that, in the absence of rationing, estimates of future consumption can be based on the pre-war normal. Hoarding may, or may not, be eliminated. Something must be allowed for the additional requirements of the Forces both in jam and ration sugar. At the moment there is a shortage of glucose. These are considerable factors in themselves, and their combined effect may be serious.

4. Experience has shown that it is not easy without rationing to secure an equitable distribution of sugar among wholesale distributors and that it is impossible as between the retailer and the consumer.

5. On a careful examination of the statistics and other relevant factors, it is considered that the proposed ration of 16 ozs. per head per week for domestic consumption could be provided with adequate supplies to catering establishments and to manufacturers on approximately their pre-war consumption plus a margin for seasonal and special demands, such as the requirements of the Services.