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## The War Cabinet—

- (1) Approved the proposals in W.P. (43) 135.
- (2) Authorised the Minister of Pensions to announce these decisions in the House of Commons at an early date in a statement on the lines of the draft annexed to W.P. (43) 135.

Civil Defence.  
Bethnal Green  
Tube Shelter  
Disaster.  
Report by  
Mr. Dunne.  
(Previous  
Reference:  
W.M. (43) 38th  
Conclusions,  
Minute 4.)

6. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security (W.P. (43) 137) covering the draft of a White Paper summarising the conclusions of the Enquiry held by Mr. Laurence Dunne into the disaster at a tube shelter in Bethnal Green on the 3rd March.

Doubt was expressed as to the expediency of publishing a summary of Mr. Dunne's findings.

*The Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security* said that he had stated in the House of Commons on the 10th March that, subject to security considerations, the conclusions would be published. At the time of the disaster there had been considerable public feeling, particularly among people living in the neighbourhood, and there had been some dissatisfaction that the Enquiry should be held in private. Pressure for a Public Enquiry had been resisted on the basis that, subject to security considerations, the findings would be published, and, if it were now decided that Mr. Dunne's conclusions should not be announced, it would be generally assumed that there was something to hide.

In discussion, there was strong support for the view that the publication of the proposed White Paper would give the incident a disproportionate importance, and might encourage the enemy to make further nuisance raids.

The view of the War Cabinet was that it would be preferable if the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security, instead of publishing a summary of the conclusions in a White Paper, made a short oral statement in the House of Commons. Points to be included in such a statement would be that Mr. Dunne's report had been received and considered; that certain suggestions had been made for modifications of existing arrangements which might reduce the risk of a further disaster of this kind, and that action was already being taken to introduce these modifications, not only at this shelter, but at similar shelters elsewhere; and that there was no evidence whatever for the suggestion that the disaster was due to Jewish or Fascist elements among the people taking refuge in the shelter.

## The War Cabinet—

Invited the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security to consider whether he could not deal with this matter by an oral statement in the House of Commons on these lines.

Refugees.  
(Previous  
Reference:  
W.M. (43) 44th  
Conclusions,  
Minute 4.)

7. *The Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs* said that the United States Government had now appointed their representatives to the Conference on Refugees, which was to be held at Bermuda. The Secretary of State proposed that our Delegation should comprise the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Law), the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs (Mr. Peake), and the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hall).

The Secretary of State said that the chief aim of the Delegation would be to secure United States agreement over—

- (a) the use of North Africa as a territory of refuge for Allied and stateless refugees;