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Foreign and Military Affairs

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Questions concerning foreign and military affairs are not necessarily brought before the Cabinet for decision, although they are frequently discussed in Cabinet and Ministers are kept informed by the circulation of memoranda and telegrams by the Foreign Office, Commonwealth Relations Office and Colonial Office and, in certain cases, the Service Departments.

It is usual for 'Foreign Affairs' to be placed at the beginning of the agenda for the first of the two regular weekly meetings of the Cabinet, so that the Foreign Secretary has a regular opportunity of informing the Cabinet of current developments.

By 1927 the practice of having 'Foreign Affairs' on the Agenda, which had hitherto been somewhat intermittent, crystallised and thereafter it appeared regularly up to the period immediately before the war. During 1938 and 1939 there were very few Cabinets which did not begin with 'Foreign Affairs' as the first item. The usual entry on the Agenda was "FOREIGN AFFAIRS (if required)", but often a particular item was noted under the general heading, e.g. "FOREIGN AFFAIRS: Situation in China." File 48 Part 2, minute of 22nd November, 1945.

During the war it was the regular practice to put the foreign and military situations first on the Agenda for the Monday meetings of the War Cabinet.

The practice of putting "Foreign Affairs" on the Agenda at the first of the two weekly meetings of the Cabinet was restored in November, 1945. File 48 Part 2, Minutes of 27th November, 1945.