

*Printed for the War Cabinet. March 1917.*SECRET

28

## WAR CABINET, 94.

*Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, on Monday,  
March 12, 1917, at 11.30 A.M.*

Present :

The PRIME MINISTER (*in the Chair*).The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF  
KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. A. HENDERSON, M.P.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER,  
G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P.

The following were also present :—

The Right Hon. SIR GEORGE H. PERLEY,  
K.C.M.G., Minister of Overseas Military  
Forces of Canada. (For Minute 4.)The Right Hon. SIR E. CARSON, K.C., M.P.,  
First Lord of the Admiralty.The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M.,  
M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign  
Affairs.Admiral SIR J. R. JELlicoe, G.C.B.,  
O.M., G.C.V.O., First Sea Lord of the  
Admiralty. (For Minutes 1 to 7.)The Right Hon. the LORD HARDINGE OF  
PENSHURST, K.G., G.C.B., G.C.S.I.,  
G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., I.S.O.,  
Permanent Under-Secretary of State for  
Foreign Affairs.SIR ARTHUR HIRTZEL, K.C.B., India Office.  
(For Minute 8.)The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, K.G.,  
G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for  
War.Lieutenant-Colonel SIR MARK SYKES,  
Bart., M.P. (For Minute 8.)General SIR W. R. ROBERTSON, G.C.B.,  
K.C.V.O., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial  
General Staff. (For Minutes 1 to 9.)Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary.*Colonel E. D. SWINTON, C.B., D.S.O., *Assistant Secretary.*Fleet Paymaster P. H. ROW, R.N., *Assistant Secretary.*

Anglo-French  
Conference.

## 1. THE War Cabinet decided that—

The members of the Anglo-French Conference who had arrived in London that day should attend a Meeting at 10, Downing Street, in the afternoon; that the respective military members should discuss the points which particularly affected them separately, whilst the remaining members considered other subjects. The general question of transportation should be raised.

## Mesopotamia.

2. When informing the War Cabinet of the capture of Baghdad by the British forces, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff took the opportunity to explain that the performance was even more meritorious than appeared from the accounts in the press, owing to the fact that the troops under Lieut.-General Sir S. Maude had been opposed by eight or nine fresh Turkish battalions which had reinforced the enemy's forces since the fighting at Kut-el-Amara, and had made a determined resistance. The War Cabinet decided that—

- (a.) The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should send a congratulatory telegram to the General Officer Commanding the British force in Mesopotamia;
- (b.) The Chancellor of the Exchequer should make a statement in the House of Commons on the subject of our success, giving further details of the action, from information that would be supplied by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, and laying stress on the great improvement that had been brought about in the supply organisation of the Army.

## The Western Front.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported a continuation of the withdrawal further back of the German Headquarters on the Western Front, this movement now extending from Ypres in the north to Soissons in the south. He also stated that, in the opinion of the French, there were indications of the probability of retirements on the part of the German troops on our right, and that there were signs that the new German divisions which had recently been formed were being pushed forward into Belgium (War Cabinet, 91, Minute 5).

Uniform for Labour  
Battalions.

4. At the instance of Sir George Perley a short preliminary discussion took place on the question whether the men from the Oversea Dominions who were serving in Labour Battalions should wear uniform. The War Cabinet decided that—

The question should be referred to a conference between Lord Derby, the Secretary of State for War, and Sir George Perley.

Loss of a Transport.  
The Ramming of  
an Italian  
Submarine.

5. The First Sea Lord enumerated the naval losses and incidents which had occurred since his last statement, and reported the loss of the transport "Georgian," which had been torpedoed on the 8th March near Crete, and that the British sloop "Cyclamen," whilst doing escort duty, had sunk an Italian submarine off Corsica. In reference to the latter occurrence the Admiralty had telegraphed to the Italian Government to express the regrets of the Board of Admiralty, and had directed that an enquiry should be held into the circumstances that led to the accident. The Italians had been warned beforehand of the passage of the "Cyclamen" and the ship she was escorting, and, according to the information at present available, it did not seem that any blame could be attached to the British commander.

Losses by  
Submarines.

6. The First Sea Lord stated his opinion that the position in regard to losses from the action of enemy submarines was rather more satisfactory than he had expected, if the fact that the period of full moon just over were taken into consideration.

Loss of the Belgian  
Relief Ship  
"Storstad."

7. The First Lord expressed his opinion that the sinking of the Belgian relief ship "Storstad" by the Germans was a particularly bad case, this vessel having been sunk one hour after she had been first attacked, and after she had hoisted the Belgian colours. The War Cabinet decided that—

The details of this action should be made public after they had been confirmed.

Bagdad :  
Proclamation.

8. The War Cabinet had under consideration a draft Proclamation, which it was proposed to issue to the people of Bagdad, which had been prepared by representatives of the Foreign Office and India Office, in consultation with Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Mark Sykes. On this draft Proclamation the Secretary of State for India had noted his apprehension that some of its terms might easily lead to charges of breach of faith in the future, if circumstances should render it impossible to give the complete freedom which they might be held to promise. He therefore submitted certain suggested amendments and a draft telegram to the Government of India (Paper G.T.-139. Appendix I). Sir Mark Sykes read a memorandum on the Secretary of State for India's amendments to the proposed Proclamation (Paper G.T.-142. Appendix II).

The War Cabinet, whilst agreed in principle as to the desirability of developing the self-government of the Arabs under their own laws and according to their own institutions, were of opinion that the British Government should not, at the present stage of the war, use language that might be held to imply undertakings which it could not be certain of carrying out. On the other hand, they recognised the very great importance, both from the point of view of the future and from that of the present conduct of military operations, not only of initiating a policy that would satisfy the Arabs throughout the East, but of announcing the fact publicly in a manner that would appeal to their imagination.

In accordance with the above views, the War Cabinet discussed the advisability of omitting the whole of the second sentence of clause 7 of the draft Proclamation (Appendix II), and of adopting the Secretary of State for India's alternative draft for clause 9; but, in order that the matter might be given full consideration, the War Cabinet decided that—

The terms of the draft Proclamation, and the nature of the communication on the subject to be made to the Political Officer of the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force, should be considered by a Committee composed of—

Lord Curzon,  
Lord Milner,  
Mr. A. Chamberlain,  
Lord Hardinge,

which Committee should make such alterations as were necessary in the draft and report their decision to the War Cabinet.

The Calais  
Conference.

9. The War Cabinet had under consideration a letter from Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff dated the 11th March (Appendix III), on the subject of the exact effect on the relations of the two Commanders-in-chief of the Agreement signed at Calais on the 27th February (War Cabinet, 82, Appendix III).

The War Cabinet approved the proposals in Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig's letter, subject to the reservation of the third and fourth items in paragraph 15, for discussion between Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in the first instance and the Prime Minister subsequently. They concurred with Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig that the liaison mission to be attached to the French General Headquarters could not have the extended rôle <sup>stated to be</sup> proposed by General Nivelle.

The Interim  
Report of the  
Dardanelles  
Commission.

10. The Prime Minister drew ~~to~~ the attention of the War Cabinet, a letter he had received from Mr. Winston Churchill pointing out that he himself and, to a less extent, the late Government were injured by some of the excisions made in the Report of the Dardanelles Commission as approved for publication, and expressing his opinion that the summary of evidence contained in the Commission's Report did not in all cases present that evidence properly, and that, in consequence, he would feel obliged to press for the publication of so much of the evidence as it was not essential in the public interest to conceal. The War Cabinet decided that—

It would not be in the public interest to publish the evidence taken by the Dardanelles Commission, in view of the strongly expressed opinion of the Commission itself.

In regard to the particular objections urged by Mr. Churchill to the excision of certain portions, the War Cabinet authorised the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he thought fit, to make an offer in the House of Commons that he himself should meet Mr. Asquith and Mr. Churchill with a view to the preparation of new paragraphs which should sufficiently represent the substance of the excised passages and could be published without injury to the public interest.

The First Report  
of the Mesopotamia  
Commission.  
The Second Report  
of the Dardanelles  
Commission.

11. The War Cabinet briefly discussed the question of whether, in view of the difficulties which have arisen as the result of the publication of the Interim Report of the Dardanelles Commission, it would be practicable and expedient to postpone publication in the cases of the Report of the Mesopotamian Commission and the Second Report of the Dardanelles Commission. The War Cabinet considered that—

In view of the terms of section 6 of "The Special Commissions (Dardanelles and Mesopotamia) Act, 1916," the publication of the Reports could not be postponed except by means of an Amending Act.

The views of Lord George Hamilton, Chairman of the Mesopotamia Commission, were reported to the War Cabinet, to the effect that, in view more particularly of the enquiry which the Commission had been instructed to hold into the medical and transport questions, it would be impossible to escape publication, nor would he advise it.

(Initialled) D. L. G.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,  
March 12, 1917.

## APPENDIX I.

## BAGHDAD.

I CIRCULATE draft proclamation for publication in Baghdad, if and when our troops occupy it, as agreed between Sir M. Sykes and representatives of the Foreign Office and India Office.

A very early decision on its terms is requested.

I am myself uneasy about the wide terms of the promise conveyed in paragraph 7, and fear that they may easily lead to charges of breach of faith in future, if circumstances render it impossible for us to give the complete freedom which they may be held to promise. I am not aware that the Cabinet has ever definitely decided what the exact political position of the Baghdad vilayet should be, and I doubt whether it is possible to decide that question at this moment.

I therefore suggest an alternative formula, which, I think, equally suitable under present circumstances and less fraught with danger for the future.

(Initialled) A. C.

March 10, 1917.

## BAGHDAD.

*Draft Proclamation.**To the People of Baghdad :*

1. In the name of my King and in the name of the people over whom he rules, I address you as follows :—

2. Our military operations have as their object the defeat of the enemy, and the driving of him from these territories. In order to complete this task, I am charged with absolute and supreme control of all regions in which British troops operate, but our armies do not come into your cities and lands as conquerors or enemies, but as liberators.

3. Since the days of Halaka your city and your lands have been subject to the tyranny of strangers, your palaces have fallen into ruins, your gardens have sunken in desolation, and your forefathers and yourselves have groaned in bondage. Your sons have been carried off to wars not of your seeking, your wealth has been stripped from you by unjust men and squandered in distant places.

4. Since the days of Midhat, the Turks have talked of reforms, yet do not the ruins and wastes of to-day testify the vanity of those promises ?

5. It is the wish not only of my King and his peoples, but it is also the wish of the great nations with whom he is in alliance, that you should prosper even as in the past, when your lands were fertile, when your ancestors gave to the world literature, science, and art, and when Baghdad city stretched from Kadhimain to Dialah.

6. Between your people and the dominions of my King there has been a close bond of interest. For 200 years have the merchants of Baghdad and Great Britain traded together in mutual profit and friendship. On the other hand, the Germans and Turks who have despoiled you and yours, have, for twenty years, made Baghdad a centre of power from which to attack the dominions of the British and the Allies of the British in Persia and Arabia, therefore the British Government cannot remain indifferent as to what takes place in your country now or in the future, for in duty to the interests of the British people and their Allies the British Government cannot risk that being done in Baghdad again which has been done by the Turks and Germans during the war.

7. But you people of Baghdad are not to understand from this that it is the wish of the British Government to impose upon you alien institutions. [But remember it rests with those who are well advised among you to prepare the way so that the British people may when the time comes give freedom to those who have proved themselves worthy to enjoy their own wealth and substance under their own institutions

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C

and laws.]\* In Hejaz the Arabs have expelled the Turks and Germans who oppressed them and proclaimed the Sherif Hussein as their King, and his Lordship rules in independence and freedom and is the ally of the nations who are fighting against the power of Turkey and Germany ; so, indeed, are the noble Arabs, the Lords of Koweit, Nejd, and Asir.

\* *Alternative formula proposed by Mr. Chamberlain: . . . . alien institutions. It is the desire of the British Government that the Arabs of Irak and Baghdad shall in future be free from oppression, and enjoy their wealth and substance under institutions and laws congenial to them.*

8. Many noble Arabs have perished in the cause of Arab freedom at the hands of those alien rulers, the Turks, who oppressed them. It is the determination of the Government of Great Britain and the Great Powers allied to Great Britain that these noble Arabs shall not have suffered in vain. It is the hope and desire of the British people and the nations in alliance with them that the Arab race may rise once more to greatness and renown among the peoples of the earth, and that it shall bind itself together to this end in unity and concord.

9. O people of Baghdad, remember that for 800 years you have suffered under Powers which have ever endeavoured to set one Arab house against another in order that it might profit by your dissensions. This policy is abhorrent to Great Britain and her Allies, for there can be neither peace nor prosperity where there is enmity and misgovernment. Therefore I am commanded to invite you, through your nobles and elders and representatives, to participate in the management of your civil affairs in collaboration with the political representatives of Great Britain who accompany the British army [so that in due time you may be in a position to unite with your kinsmen in north, east, south, and west in realising the aspirations of your race].†

† *Alternative formula proposed by Mr. Chamberlain: . . . . so that you may be united with your kinsmen in north, east, south, and west in realising the aspirations of your race.*

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*From General Maude, Basra, 6th March, 1917.—(Received 12.10 P.M., 8th March.)*

X. 1140 (6th).

Should we occupy Baghdad, scope of civil administration will be greatly increased and number of civil and political officers will be urgently required.

Government will, I am sure, appreciate immense importance of starting civil administration of Baghdad vilayet on satisfactory lines with adequate staff, and I trust that utmost may be done to comply with Cox's requisitions for individual officers.

(Addressed to Foreign, Delhi ; repeated to Secretary of State for India.)

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*Draft Telegram to Government of India.*

(Foreign Secret.)

Maude's telegram 6th March.

His Majesty's Government do not underrate the importance of sound administration in Baghdad, and fully appreciate efficiency of that introduced by your officers in Basra. But the basis of their policy is the Arab State, and they are not prepared to approve the extension of direct British administration to Baghdad vilayet. Until the war is over and the whole set of problems connected with the Arab State have been cleared up with King Husain and the other Allies, the predominant considerations in Baghdad must be political rather than administrative. His Majesty's Government therefore wish it to be clearly understood that, whatever may be ultimate decision, the existing administrative machinery is, as far as possible, to be preserved for the present, with the substitution of Arab for Turkish spirit and personnel. The façade must be Arab. While, therefore, vilayet should remain under martial law for the security of the occupying force, the inhabitants should be formally invited to participate in the civil administration with British co-operation. Every effort should be made to induce representative men to come forward for this purpose, and the British officers to be lent should be strictly limited to minimum necessary as advisers.

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## APPENDIX II.

*Memorandum on Mr. Austen Chamberlain's Amendment of the Proposed Proclamation to the People of Baghdad.*

I HAVE read the amendment, and I consider that it will be understood by the Arab Nationalist party to mean that Baghdad is to be a part of the Indian Empire, a prospect which would be abhorrent to them for a variety of reasons.

The Arab is above all proud; he does not want favours granting him. If we desire to get on with the Arabs we must not patronise, but we must be firm.

The difference between the two paragraphs is this: the original paragraph, if properly translated, will mean, "If you support us, you will be our equals in internal affairs, which you will manage yourselves; if you do not, we have a free hand." The amendment means, "Whether you behave well or ill we shall give you good treatment, but we shall settle your affairs for you."

I am certain if we take the line of trying to rule Arabs as we rule Indians, we shall fail. We shall introduce the social colour distinction and antagonise the whole Arab movement; we shall have the intellectuals against us from the very start, and it is the intellectuals who will rule public opinion when peace comes.

For the moment Baghdad is probably a stricken, deserted city, and the proclamation will have little local effect, but the influence of the proclamation in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Arabia will, I make no doubt, be very great. Further, it will force the hands of the French. M. Picot sincerely desires to work the Arab State, but he has repeatedly told me of the opposition to which he is subjected by colonial expansionists, who only desire to impose dominion by force on the Arabs.

If we set up autonomy as our ideal we get the sympathy of every Arab Nationalist, we make it almost impossible for the French to go in for forcible dominion, and we pave the way for a better state of things in Egypt. If we offer benefits in a "white man's burden" tone of voice we pave the way for discontent, and a coalition between the Arabic-speaking Egyptian Nationalists and the Arab intellectuals. Our path is beset with dangers; if we are courageous, we have every prospect of being supreme in region (B), and beloved in region (A). If we do not play up to Arab racial pride in Baghdad, then we shall make Baghdad a restless appanage instead of a centre of influence.

Baghdad is a natural capital of practically all the inhabited areas of region (B). If we make it an Arab capital we shall control the Arabs, because we shall control Baghdad commercially, and by clause 6 we can maintain troops there.

Baghdad will be a centre of education and civilisation for all the Arabic-speaking world: if it is restless, hostile, or sullen, our influence will wane; if it is friendly our influence will wax. It will never accept our open dominion, but, if we play our cards properly by means of "advisers" instead of "rulers," and back Arab nationalism, we shall have a permanent footing at little cost.

The Arab ideal has been local autonomy ever since the constitution of 1908, it is the desire for local autonomy which has had such disastrous results for the Turks. There is much in a name, the Arabs will not object to the presence of British troops and a British General, British advisers, and British merchants, but they will never endure either the idea of a British Governor-General or an outwardly British direct-controlled civil service.

Further, it must be remembered that the Turks never denied the Arabs either social equality or executive power. Field-Marshal Mahmud Shefket, Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish Army, was a Baghdadi, and virtually an Arab; Izzet, the great Second Secretary of Abdul Hamid, was a Damascene; that is to say, that the two most powerful persons in the Empire were men of Arab extraction. It is impossible to approach a people with an intellectual class which has produced men who have held such offices in the same spirit as one might approach tribesmen or natives who accept European superiority as a matter of course.

The political conditions and possibilities in the area between Kut and Kerkuk are entirely different to the conditions between Kut and Basra. The southern area is a country which has relapsed into complete barbarism and anarchy, and is inhabited practically by savages with no intellectual class, and I am pretty sure the Arab nationalist party would be glad to see us rule it. The northern area has been the centre of organised government from time immemorial, and has sent an annual quota

to the military and civil service schools, and consequently has in peace time a large intellectual class. The members of this class are, it is true, scattered and terrified, but it is of the greatest importance to demonstrate to them that their ideals are not contrary to ours, and to leave the door open for them to come in on our side without loss of dignity. Of course, everything depends on our capacity to hold Baghdad, and it will require some considerable period of occupation to prove this to the people, who will remember that the Arab leaders who took our part at Kut were hanged, and that though we exchanged prisoners with the Turks we were unable to protect those who had taken our side.

(Initialled) M. S.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S. .,  
March 10, 1917.

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APPENDIX III.

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(O.A.D. 335.)  
C.I.G.S.,

March 11, 1917.

1. AS the Cabinet are aware, I am of opinion that, from a purely military point of view, the recent Cabinet decision, as recorded in the agreement made at Calais on the 27th February last, is open to grave objections; and I fear that it will tend to impair rather than to promote unity of effort.

2. I pointed out in my official memorandum, handed to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff at Calais on the morning of the 27th February, that I could see no satisfactory alternative between the system which obtained previous to the Calais Conference and the placing of our armies in France entirely under the French Commander-in-Chief, the latter being a course which I did not recommend.

3. The proposals put forward by the French authorities at the Conference would practically have given them complete control of our armies, but these proposals were not accepted, and eventually a compromise was decided on.

4. While realising the difficulties of working this compromise successfully, I felt it my duty to say that I would do my best to give effect to the Cabinet's decision. I have done so, and will continue to do so, but the situation which has arisen since the Conference, in regard to the relations between the French and British commands, appears to me to be so unsatisfactory and even dangerous that I think it necessary to make a full and frank statement of my views on it. I do so after careful reflection and with a full sense of the seriousness of what I have to say.

5. At Calais General Nivelle assured me that the proposed alteration of our existing relations had not been brought about by any action or wish of his, or even with his knowledge. I believed that he would help me to make the best of a difficult situation, but that hope has not been realised.

6. Immediately after the Conference I received from him instructions, couched in somewhat dictatorial language, and this communication was followed a few days later by another in a still stronger tone. Apart from any question of personal dignity, which I am anxious to sink as far as I can, I submit that the tone of these letters, addressed to a British Field-Marshal, Commanding the largest Armies the Empire has ever placed in the field, and drawn from all parts of it, is open to objection.

7. A still more serious objection is that in these letters an effort is made to grasp more power over our Armies than was conferred by the Calais Agreement.

8. This tendency was shown in the original proposals made by the French authorities at the Calais Conference, and it appears again in the entire change proposed in the duties of the British Mission at French General Headquarters.

9. Hitherto the Head of this Mission has been my representative with the French Commander-in-Chief, and I understood that this system was to continue, and that all that was asked for was more senior officers and a larger number of them. This, if considered advantageous, I am quite ready to accede to, but what is now asked for amounts to a British General Staff, through which I am to receive General Nivelle's orders, and which is to report direct, over my head, to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

10. I had heard rumours before the Calais Conference of a desire in some quarters in France to gain practically complete control over the British Armies, and even to break up their unity and "sandwich" British units and formations between French troops under French control.



11. I do not presume to say that responsible French authorities would countenance any such scheme, but I cannot overlook the tendency shown to seize more power, as attested by the facts I have quoted.

12. It is natural that France should hope to emerge from the war with a national triumph and as great a position as possible in the eyes of the world, but in my opinion it would be very dangerous to fail to make full allowance for national feeling on our side also, and especially in our Armies. If those Armies were placed under French control, I venture to say that, apart from wounded dignity, a belief might very easily arise that British interests and British casualties were being treated as—at most—a secondary consideration, and very serious friction would result.

13. Whatever may be the views of the War Cabinet on these questions, I must point out to them that at a moment when all my energies and thoughts should be devoted to dealing with a very complicated military situation, which is likely to develop into the decisive crisis of the war, I find myself involved in what almost amounts to a controversy with our Allies, of such importance that much of my time is taken up by it.

14. In my view there is too much at stake for me to avoid this controversy. As I conceive my duties and responsibilities I cannot consent to order operations or to make dispositions which I believe to be dangerous or unsound and likely to prejudice the safety, welfare, and success of the British Armies under my command. My position and that of my General Headquarters would become impossible if the Calais Agreement were strained by the French Command beyond what I conceive to have been intended by the War Cabinet.

15. A remedy for the existing state of affairs is very urgently required. I recognise that the Calais Agreement must hold good until the situation on which it was based is judged by the War Cabinet to have changed; but I submit that the intention and terms of the agreement, which appear to me to have been misunderstood by the French authorities, should now be so clearly defined as to prevent any future misunderstanding. With that object in view, I venture to suggest that it should be made clear to the French authorities:—

That, except with the British Commander-in-Chief's consent, the French Command is not authorised to issue instructions to or have any direct official communication with any commander, body of troops, or individual in the British Armies other than the British Commander-in-Chief, with whom alone the execution of such instructions will rest.

That the French Commander-in-Chief is not to inspect British troops or visit them officially without the British Commander-in-Chief's consent.

That while it will be the duty of the British Commander-in-Chief to furnish all necessary information as to his plans, and copies of his orders, to give effect to the operations arranged for it is not within the rights of the French Commander-in-Chief to demand copies of orders issued by subordinates, or of the plans made within the British Armies to carry out the orders of the British Commander-in-Chief. The British Commander-in-Chief, however, will always be prepared to arrange for an exchange of orders when necessary to ensure effective co-operation.

That the French Commander-in-Chief is not permitted to remove any British troops or individuals from the command of their Commander-in-Chief, but, if necessary, in order to exploit a success following the effective breaking of the enemy's line on the French front during the operations arranged for, the British Commander-in-Chief will, consistent with the security of the British Armies, at once comply with any demands made by the French Commander-in-Chief for such exploitation, it being understood that the troops so detached will remain under the orders of the British Commander-in-Chief.

That while the British Commander-in-Chief has been directed to conform to General Nivelle's instructions under certain defined conditions, it is desirable that General Nivelle should address his instructions in the form of requests to an equal, and not as orders to a subordinate.

That the conditions laid down in the Calais Agreement referred specifically to certain defined offensive operations, and do not give the French Commander-in-Chief any right to dictate to the British Commander-in-Chief on other offensive operations, or on such questions as the defence of the remainder of his front, or the measures taken and dispositions made therefor.

That in case of difference of opinion, the British War Cabinet reserved to itself the right to decide as to whether any given conditions fall under the terms of the Calais

Agreement or not. As regards the new Mission, it is essential that the duties and responsibilities to be entrusted to it be clearly defined before it is appointed, and that it be definitely laid down in writing, and agreed to, that the members of the Mission are the representatives of the British Commander-in-Chief, and are under his orders. They are not to be regarded as staff officers of the French Commander-in-Chief, authorised to convey his instructions to the British Commander-in-Chief, though they may be employed if so desired to draft such instructions for General Nivelle's signature.

All instructions and communications should be signed by General Nivelle and not by a staff officer.

Finally, I suggest that it would help me in a difficult task if the War Cabinet saw fit to communicate to the French Government the expression of confidence in myself which was conveyed to me in War Office letter No. O.1/86/253 dated the 2nd March, 1917, and their belief in my will and intention to carry out loyally the terms of the Calais Agreement.

I trust that in due course the relations existing before the Calais Conference will be restored, as I am convinced that more satisfactory results can be obtained on those lines.

In the meantime, if the above recommendations are accepted, I consider that it should prove easier than it is now to carry out the terms and to attain the objects of the Calais Agreement, and I desire to state my emphatic opinion that otherwise the present difficulties are likely to increase, and an *impasse* may be reached, despite my earnest desire to sink all personal considerations and to do my utmost to ensure the success of the Allied cause.

(Signed) D. HAIG, *Field-Marshal*  
*Commanding-in-Chief British Armies in France.*