

Papers of Hugh Dalton:
Original Manuscript Diary

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2. 7. 42.

Answer an arranged Private Notice Question on the Wheat Agreement. This goes over all right. Vote of Censure debate is continued, the House having sat up till 2.30 a.m. this morning when it was counted out by MacGovern, who had spoken for three quarters of an hour himself!

I distinguish myself by missing the Division! The House being very crowded and it being impossible to get a seat, I went away to my room and there did some work by myself and succeeded in misjudging the time, arriving just after the doors had been closed and in time to hear the result - 475 to 25 - announced by the Tellers. I was exceedingly angry and learned afterwards that the Division had been called at 4 minutes to 5. The bells are not audible in the far distance, and the absurdity of the thing is that I hardly ever use this damned room at all. It is much too far away for general convenience. I think that I shall never use it again!

I go round to see the Deputy Prime Minister and pour forth my indignant regrets. But he doesn't take it very seriously and invites me to dine with him. We are joined at his Club by Evershed and Moelwyn Hughes. The former seems more and more likely to become a Regional Coal Controller.

3. 7. 42.

Still very angry about yesterday's Division, I write a note to Willy Whiteley, putting on paper the reasons why I missed it.

Preliminary conference with C.W., a number of officials, H.G. and E.D. on the Retail Trade Report. The compulsory levy will require legislation. I have already sought the views of various relevant Ministers and must consult various trade organisations.

Re-elected Chairman of the Labour Party Policy Sub-Committee.

Take a Press Conference at the Board on our new scheme of "prohibitions", which are to be called by some less drastic name, and our intention to have more Utility products - furniture, household textiles, etc.

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I was depressed by this Press Conference. There was a mass of detail to put over, and I felt that my presentation was dull and heavy, nor did the press themselves add much lightness. A few questions were asked, and these not very interesting.

Mayhew
C.M. to dine with me. He has been having a very good time in Wales with his Phantom troop. He is still very eager to get a by-election and has seen C.R.A. about this - half showing his old school tie - and G.R.S. It is difficult to arrange, but we will go on trying.

4. 7. 42.

I have an exceedingly good press this morning on my yesterday's announcement. No-one boggles at my prohibitions, not even at the word, which in my statement yesterday, in response to the fears of C.W., I had dodged and paraphrased. This only shows what people will take when the war is going badly.

To Leeds for the Annual Meeting of the Yorkshire Regional Council of the Labour Party. Quite a good gathering of some 200. Late in the proceedings I address them in the absence of the press. Ernest Jones in the Chair is very slow and thorough. The spirit seems quite good.

Stay with Milner in his comfortable house. I gather that he feels he ought to have got further in politics by now. Brett - very enthusiastic for H.G. - and Williams, whom I always like, come in to supper. Leeds is the best, I still think, of our northern cities.

5. 7. 42 (Sunday)

This Sunday morning I am driven over by the M. of I. to Hensworth. Bacon, the M. of I. officer for the area, plays up during our journey and we have an interesting talk about the problems which will arise when one or two million American soldiers are stationed in this country. They will buy up all the stuff they can, and they may not altogether like our ways, or we theirs. They will seem much richer than we, especially their soldiers than ours, and they will buy up all the girls and all the drinks. They may boast that they are winning the war for us, as well as keeping us going in other ways. There is a danger that they may go back to the U.S.A. with

/anti-British

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anti-British feelings, just as many British and American troops came back anti-French from France at the end of the last war, and the antipathy may be mutual. These are dangers to be watched for and guarded against, but they will need a good deal of watching. Another trouble is that many of the American soldiers will be Negroes, and the white Americans will tend to set about the coloured Americans even in our streets or our pubs, and then the British may sometimes take the part of the coloured Americans. Some of the difficulties may be diminished by giving the Americans, so far as possible, special towns and zones. But this cannot be done completely. With food rationing, to give them hospitality will be difficult, but a scheme may be able to be developed in which they will bring to our houses packets of their own food to be eaten in common. They will, however, annoy some of us a good deal because they have no sense of their hosts' private property and will carry off souvenirs from our houses, even sometimes breaking up our household goods for this purpose. So it all sounds a bit difficult!

Good meeting at Hemsforth Hippodrome with little George Griffiths, M.P. About a thousand miners react very well to my exposition of the Coal White Paper and the need for more output.

Lunch at Doncaster with the M. of I., one or two Labour M.P.s and miners' leaders, and Gen. Sir William Bartholomew, the Regional Commissioner. The latter is a dry little stick, but I should think has pretty good brains and a good deal of tact.

Then back to London.

6. 7. 42.

Harcourt Johnstone to lunch with me. Rather a ridiculous person with not quite enough brains or energy. He wants to form a combine with the F.O. against the Treasury. He says that "the dark forces" have lately again been in the ascendant. I ask who these are and he says Phillips and Hubert Henderson.

Conference of Home Front Ministers. "Quack, quack!" A frightful waste of time. Jowitt is supposed to be expounding his reconstruction plan, but everybody wanders all over the field.

Conference with C.W., Frost, Nowell, H.G., etc., on furniture prices. I insist that they must fix ceiling prices during the transitional period before we get Utility furniture in production. There has been reluctance about this.

Summoned to a Cab. for 7.30 to discuss a Minute by the P.M., obviously instigated by a cock-eyed version by Cherwell of the discussion last week, at which neither the P.M. nor Lord C. were present, on L.R.'s instructions, and especially on the rationing undertaking. W.A.J. and I wait about till after 8, the Cab. getting hopelessly behind their timetable, and then finally it is decided that this point will not be taken at all. Meanwhile the instructions have been telegraphed to L.R., who has acted on them, and the matter has now got as far as the President. So Lord Cherwell is too late. But he is a damned nuisance all the same - and all the time.

*Nice
Ronald*

Emerging with W.A.J. I meet G.J. in Downing Street. I go with him and have a drink and a snack at the Queens Restaurant, Sloane Square, where Cynthia is also meeting him. He says he has now become simply an F.O. official again. He rather likes Hubert Henderson and wants me to come and re-make my acquaintance with him. I tell him that his immediate chief, N.R., has written a most indiscreet letter to one of my officials proposing that we should discuss with the exiled Governments how we should all get on if the Americans completely washed their hands of Europe after the war. I say that I think this is a most undiplomatic suggestion and that it would do very great harm if it got out. Fancy, I say, discussing such matters with Gutt!

Return to the Board and discuss problems of personnel and organisation with H.G., but it is clear that some desirable action should be delayed until Horace Wilson is out of the way at the end of this month.

7. 7. 42.

See "The Young Mr Pitt" at the New Gallery. Robert Donat is first-class, and there are good spots, but the film as a whole misses some of the best possibilities of drama - the haunting fear of invasion, the manning of the Martello Towers, the meaning of the French Revolution, etc.

I think a good deal in these relatively easy days, which may not last long, of Retail Trade and Reparations.

8. 7. 42.

Party Meeting. A. Edwards, of Middlesborough, is put on the carpet, quite properly, for making a most stupid speech to the effect that attacks on the Government by Labour M.P.s are always

/rehearsed

Gordon

rehearsed beforehand - when pressed, he can only give as example George Macdonald and myself at the Party Meeting on the Coal White Paper - that "nepotism and hypocrisy" are rife, that the Labour Party should leave the Government, and that the P.M. would do much better "with men of his own choosing". Disloyal and dispeptic.

Sir A. Salter is back from the U.S. No-one in Parliament knows who he is when he rises to answer a question from the Front Bench! He tells me that the Americans have helped us wonderfully, and promptly, over ships and supplies. They have imposed a very stiff gasoline ration on themselves, which will cut very deeply into all their motoring habits.

I say that I sense in certain circles, both at the F.O. and the Treasury, an anti-American prejudice. He says that this is very real. It is the jealousy of the old British governing class at "the passing of power". He remembers how, at the end of the last war, over shipping, when we had the power, we made all our allies, and even the Americans, feel their inferiority. But at Washington the Americans have never made us, in this war, feel like suppliants, not even during the period of their neutrality.

G.J. to see me this afternoon and to enquire how I think the announcement on post-war rationing should be made. I said that I would have originally preferred an answer by the P.M. to a P.Q., but, in view of his latest Minute on the subject, I think this would not be the best way. He might make an unfortunate supplementary answer. In that case, it seems as though either A.E. or I should say it in a speech. I say that I do not feel very strongly either way, but would be quite willing to do it myself. (The fuss at the Cab. next day washes out all early action.)

H.G. and E.D. discuss with me the question of future enquiries and activities at the B. of T. I am stalling till Hopkins replaces Wilson, i.e., for a few more weeks.

9. 7. 42.

Evershed comes to tell me that he has accepted the offer of Regional Coal Controller for Notts and Derby. I daresay he will do this quite well. While he is with me I receive a sudden unexpected summons to the Cab., so this cuts him short and he has hardly time to start on the question of his successor. But he just has time to say that, when he told his Central Committee that he was going, they had some discussion on the matter and he and Frost then left the room and, in their absence, the rest decided unanimously that they thought Frost should succeed him. I receive this without much comment, merely saying that Frost has a business interest which

/might

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might be a bar. E. asks whether he should write and indicate to me the views of the Central Committee, or whether I would like them to come and tell me. I say neither the one nor the other. He has told me their views orally and that is enough. I shall be considering the question of his successor soon, and shall take advice from various quarters. The man is a damned fool to press so hard about this. There is something missing in his make up.

At the Cab., in the P.M.'s room at the H. of C., an hour is spent wrangling round the rationing formula in L.R.'s instructions. The P.M., egged on by little K.W., is much against any immediate "commitment". He has written a most eloquent and cogent Minute based on someone's misrepresentation to him of the meaning of our formula. He says he thinks it means that we undertake now, even though the Americans go on eating enormous and unrationed meals, to come down, after the war, to the level of Roumania. The truth is that he dislikes rationing as such and does not readily accept the view that it will be necessary to continue it, in any case, for some considerable time after the war. He and E.B. have quite an argument, the latter saying that our people are better fed now than they have ever been, and that we cannot "go back to chaos" after the war. To which the P.M. replies "You are trying once more to pre-judge the settlement of our post-war problems. What you call chaos others might call freedom." The P.M. has also got it into his head that some of us still want "rationing for rationing's sake", "hordes of officials", "the people clamped down in a bureaucratic grip", etc. He is really very tiresome this morning, but in the end it is agreed that a telegram shall be sent to L.R. which, in effect, varies his instructions very little. He has already acted on them and communicated, in confidence, our formula to Acheson. Probably it has got by now to the President, so K.W. has been a little too late!

In the afternoon see -

- (1) Joint Ctee. of B.T., T.U.C. and B.E.C. on Clothes Rationing,
- (2) Tennyson, Chairman of my Utility Furniture Ctee.,
- (3) R.S. Edwards of the C.W.S., who is delighted at the idea that he should become one of my Business Members,
- (4) Cunliffe, over China Clay, who are obstructing concentration,
- (5) Nowell, on Retail Trade arrangements.

J.W. and I dine with Sir Jocelyn Lucas, M.P., who gives J.W. two of his books on Dogs. He is, I think, a little barmy. He has with him a wife who gushes without much comprehension and a young Wavy-Navy officer who escaped from Hong Kong the night it fell.

/He

He takes a most objective view of the Japs. He says they are fanatically brave; If they die in battle, they go straight to Heaven; if they die otherwise they go first to Purgatory. They behaved badly at Hong Kong, but then they always do, and did much worse things to the Chinese at Nanking. They feed our prisoners on rice, chucking sacks of it through the barbed wire and leaving them to cook it as best they can. On the other hand, they only have rice themselves and there is no obvious reason why they should feed us better. The guards are said to be quite prepared to instruct the British prisoners how to cook the rice. The worst thing in the camps is the lack of medical necessities. At HongKong the two Indian battalions fought very well, the two British battalions quite well, and the two Canadian battalions did their best, though they arrived with hardly any previous training or knowledge of their arms.

Sir J.L. wanted to talk about nominee shareholdings and their prohibition. It is not clear why he is interested in this.

10. 7. 42.

L.P.'s Ctee. Films Commission and Export programme. All are keen to do something vigorous about the films. Exports to South America should now be maintained at the present low level.

Evershed calls again, to say one more good-bye. He is becoming a bit of a bore. I tell him I cannot appoint Frost to succeed him. I mention that I sounded my colleagues this morning and they all agreed it should be a lawyer, or at least a man not in trade. E. is to see F. this weekend and write to me how he takes it. I will see F. next week.

After a lot of odds and ends - including one case of frightful incompetence by B.T. officials for which I have to write a letter of apology to a Leeds firm, catch a train to the country.

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Back to London after sunny weekend, with lots of raspberries and grass-cutting.

Lunch with Harcourt Johnstone, and Law, where we talk anti-Treasury. It is suggested that we might get a Committee on External Economic Affairs, with Jowitt in the Chair, and Treasury, F.O., and B.T. represented by Ministers. Law is getting less shy.

14. 7. 42.

Handschrift Meet my new Furniture Committee at their first meeting. They look quite a good bunch, including Mrs Wimborn, who has had a very good press, the Rev. Jenkinson, who appears dressed like a layman, and Mr Lebus, who looks younger and less Semitic than I had feared. I think they should do well.

Sir F. Whyte and Somervell on Films. Whyte's Committee has made an unacceptable report, seeming to criticise the B. of T. I arrange for S. to attend their next meeting and reason with them.

Frank Platt, cheerful and a bit of a rascal, says that my officials ask too many questions, when he is trying to help them quietly. I plan to go to Manchester in September.

Frost to see me. I break to him that he cannot be Evershed's successor, since such an appointment would expose both him and me to tiresome criticism. He quite sees the point. He is clear that E.'s successor should be a lawyer. We then drift off to talk of Italy, and he tells me that he nearly came to P.W.E. to run the Italian Section. He has a house at Ravello. We talk very pleasantly on this subject, and I prolong it a bit, in order to leave a good atmosphere. E. had hinted to me that F. felt inferior, having risen from nothing, but I saw no sign of this. He will be glad to go on working, provided he can get on with the new Chairman.

15. 7. 42.

Luckhurst Scott comes to ask my view on Joad as a Parliamentary Labour candidate. This view is adverse. He is against the war, or was, and has not recanted. Also his past life might lead to most embarrassing questions, as with the Blanco-Whites. I say there are many far better men whom we should push in front of him.

S. says that Middleton, who has been in bed a week, has been examined by a doctor, who says that he has nothing wrong with him except a high blood pressure.

Busse comes to report his interview with Schuster, of the Lord Chancellor's Department. Various lawyers are on offer as successor to Evershed. Much the best possibility is Lord Justice du Parcq. I ask for this to be explored. B. is agreeable and intelligent and very pro-Bar. Whether he is capable I don't know.

Lunch at the House and run into M. Webb, who says that his information is that the P.M. is most anxious to have the Beaver back in the War Cab. He feels a longing for his companionship, feeling acutely at this time the burden of the war. From none of his other colleagues does he get so much stimulus. But there is much opposition. Both Cripps and Bevin talk of going out if the Beaver comes in again. The P.M. is said to be quite prepared to lose Cripps now, his stock having fallen. As for E.B., it is more doubtful if he would stand firm on going out. But a number of Tories are against the Beaver coming back, and M.W. thinks that it is impossible for the P.M. to have his way. It is also rumoured that Garro may soon be appointed Under-Secretary to Lyttelton. This would not be at all a bad appointment.

Phillips Price, with Quibell, has been appointed a Forestry Commissioner. He will be both keen on it and good at it. Grenfell resigned when made a Minister, and Walter Smith died. Thus two vacancies were created. And now Grenfell is nothing. Serve him right!

Interview with five Co-operators - Pickup, Fulker, Palmer, Blower and Haw - on the Retail Trade Report. Their views are very clear, definite and adverse to the recommendations.

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15. 7. 42. (contd.)

Sir G. Schuster to see me. Rather shifty and bogus. Won't be in the House next week when Retail Trade will be debated; doubts, in any case, whether he ought to speak since his firm may be held to be concerned; was much shocked, when he took over Home and Colonial Stores, at low wages paid and lack of recognition of Trade Union; has insisted on these matters being corrected, and finds Hann most reasonable; thinks that we should have a census of distribution; much talk about public interest and how he and all his lot are prepared to make any necessary sacrifices.

H.G. to dine. He agrees with my inclination to stall for several weeks until the whole bunch of personnel problems can be dealt with together, after H.W.'s retirement.

*Harold Wilson*16. 7. 42.

Do a broadcast - it is recorded and played back and sounds not too bad - to North America on the work of the B.T. in mobilising the Home Front for war.

Receive National Chamber of Trade on Retail Trade Report. A most jovial meeting, in the course of which I give no commitments, but I gather that the impression created is such that members of the deputation believe they will get everything they want! I begin, indeed, by saying that neither I nor H.M.G. have yet taken any decision on the recommendations, nor will until we have heard all views. Howling, to whom I emphasise, and likewise he to me, the part I played with him, and on behalf of the Labour Party, in support of his Landlord and Tenant Bill way back in 1920, organises his deputation very well. A lady member, representing the book-sellers, showing signs of expressing a wish to contract out, is promptly chased back into the fold. I ask H. for definite evidence that small traders are getting less than their fair share of supplies. He promises to let me have it, and I promise him a personal interview. He says that yesterday, at the Annual Meeting of the Chamber of Trade, after a proposal had been made that the Report should be rejected, this would have been carried by a large majority. In fact, they had carried unanimously a rather milder resolution, which none the less expressed the view that the recommendations were "not a satisfactory solution" and raised a series of "objections".

/Lunch

Lunch with Rendel, now our "Ambassador" to the Jugs. A not very interesting party. The poor little Swiss Minister, looking more frightened than ever, is there with his lean and stupid wife. Also the Egyptian Ambassador, whom I don't care for much, and one or two other people. But the most attractive is the Polish wife of the Yugoslav Consul, Gavrilovic, not to be confused with his namesake now a member of their Government and previously their Minister at Moscow.

Receive in the afternoon Hallsworth and Hann, each with one companion. They defend their signatures to the Retail Trade Report. Hallsworth is rather long-winded and inconclusive, wobbling especially on the provision that the levy should be a trade expense for the purposes of the Prices of Goods Act. He says he does not admit that this would mean an increase of prices. But, of course, this is the clear intention of the recommendation. Hann makes a better case, saying that he signed the Report because he wants to get rid of small shops, since these pay worse wages and have worse conditions. He hopes that the inducement to withdraw will appeal to a large number of small shopkeepers, and he does not think that most of them will ever want to come back. He is also strongly in favour of the licensing of new shops. This is the beginning of planned economy in distribution. Till lately the N.U.D.A.W. was opposed to this, but has now come round to his view. This is the closest approach I have yet had in these interviews to support for the recommendations of the Committee.

Next come Alfred Barnes, M.P., with four of his colleagues to make complaint against local Price Regulation Committees, who have discriminated against Co-op Stores, following blitz damage, in Plymouth, Portsmouth and elsewhere.

Then Sir H.d'Egville, who has just got back after a very long absence in North America. He tells a great tale, as usual, of what he has been doing, and thinks that it has been very important, both in Canada, where he has formed Branches of the E.P.A. and Study Circles not only at Ottawa but in other Provinces, and at Washington, where, according to his own account, he has been getting on very well with Senators and Congressmen and had almost arranged for a visit by a party of them to this country, when Halifax and the Embassy butted in and made a muddle of it. He is anti-Embassy and says that Halifax leaves too much to a young man called Angus Malcolm, who has very bad judgment and tries, without success, to be very American. We ought, he thinks, to send more "Middleclass Englishmen from the North and the Midlands" to the U.S.A. Thus he /praises

praises a certain Marsden, a Ministry of Food official, who has made a very good impression. He hints that he realises there has been some objection here to his having been away so long, and even some idea that it was because he thought it safer beyond the Atlantic. I tell him that everyone here has been very much pre-occupied and that he has rather passed out of their minds. As to "safety", there may have been some idea of this while the blitz was on, but not lately. I undertake to come to the meeting of the E.P.A. Executive next Wednesday, when he will make a report and suggestions.

See Anderson, who has not read the Retail Trade Report, and get his agreement to (1) my adopting a completely non-committal attitude on behalf of H.M.G. next Thursday, and (2) my not bringing the question at present before the L.P.Cttee. He is inclined to think that the compulsory levy is not the right way. I tell him that, so far, the proposals have had practically no real support.

H.G. has discovered that Sir H. Wilson does not go until his 60th birthday, August 21st. This is later than I had hoped. I conclude that I must broach some of the questions of personnel with Sir A.O. before that. Meanwhile, H.G. should tell Maude that it would be interesting if T. were to return to this country, so that I could have a look at him, though without any commitment.

DIARY

17. 7. 42.

See Retail Distributors' Association and Multiple Shops' Federation. Neither much likes the Report but both are a bit shy of attacking it too hard.

Confront Sir S.Beale and R.S.Edwards at lunch at the Lansdowne. It doesn't go very well, the latter being really a bit scared of the former, who tries his best to put him at his ease. Afterwards I bring them both back to the Board and leave them together. (I hear afterwards that this goes better.) I give E. an official invitation to become a Business Member of the Industrial and Export Council, and he will submit this next week to his Board.

To my constituency in the afternoon. This is my first visit since I became P.B.T., but there is no suggestion that I have left them too long. Travel up in the train with Mascall and two chaps from Darlington.

18. 7. 42.

At B.A. Sleep late and then see a lot of people. Private Delegate Meeting in the afternoon and Public Meeting at night. I make a long speech, mostly on coal, expounding the W.P. (I had told the delegates a bit more about this and the difficulties over rationing. I had told them bluntly that the Labour Party was not at all keen, least of all the miners, and that this had been one of the reasons why, though I had got the Party's support "for the principle", I had decided to make concessions on this provided we got something good on reorganisation.) I say at the Public Meeting that we had got more in the W.P. than either the first or the second Labour Government was able to achieve for the miners, and I gave a long list of the new gains, including prominently the increase in wages. The reception is very good, and a vote of thanks is moved and seconded by Bland and Jack Bell, it being thought fit that two miners' representatives should do this. One of them says that Lawther said the other day that I had been largely responsible for laying the foundations for a new order in the coal fields. From this source, this is quite unusual praise!

19. 7. 42. (Sunday)

Play two sets of tennis in the morning and catch an afternoon train back to London. I am extremely fortunate in my

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constituents. The only grizzle I have had during this weekend is from silly old Meehan about Old Age Pensions. He said that there was bitter disappointment among the old people at the "non-militant attitude) of the Labour Party on their behalf. I argued with him a bit, dwelling in particular on the fact that many old age pensioners were now drawing wages, and that the Labour Party had never undertaken that there should be any increase in pensions except to those who had retired. This knocked out the possibility of an all-round flat increase.

20. 7. 42.

See Association of British Chambers of Commerce, and later National Pharmaceutical Union and Company Chemists' Association. I am getting to know a hell of a lot about retail trade! I begin to prepare my speech on my Estimates for Thursday.

21. 7. 42.

See the Newsagents, Tobacconists and Confectioners; all much against the Cttee.'s Report. Spend some time at the House pre-arranging Thursday's debate. Barnes will speak for the Party and take a personally friendly line. I am also getting Jennie Adamson to speak in praise of utility clothing.

22. 7. 42.

National Executive in the morning, where I make a short statement on retail trade. None of them seem to know much about it.

See Drapers' Chamber of Trade, my last "consultation". They, surprisingly, are in favour of the proposals, but also complain of distribution of available supplies to small men.

E.P.A. Executive in the afternoon with explanations by d'Egville for his long absence in North America. We agree that he has done very useful work, and will let him return soon, though not this time for so long.

Spend the evening preparing my speech. H.G. has collected quantities of stuff and the difficulty is what to leave out. He and J.W. both prepare perorations, the latter's being to the effect that shops are the most glorious places in the world.

23. 7. 42.

Board of Trade Vote in the House. I speak for 67 minutes on Concentration of Industry, Utility Production, and Retail Trade. It goes over pretty well. There is no serious criticism of either of the first two and on the third there is general approval of my consultations with the interests and the House before deciding on action. Only Mrs Tate really stands up for the Committee's Report. C.W. replies at the end to the not very serious points and queries raised. On the whole, quite a good day. Asked whether I was wearing a Utility suit, I said that I was saving up my coupons, as all should do who could, and that the suit I was wearing was made in 1930 - I had begun to say 1830! - but added that it was too thin generally to be worn in the British climate.

Dine at Jozefs with J.W. and H.G. and feel that we have gone through this incident in a Minister's life with reasonably good marks.

DIARY24. 7. 42.

Du Parcq (Lord Justice) calls on my invitation. Very benign. As I expected, he can't take on the Chairmanship of the Price Regulation Committee, but promises to send some names. I ask his view of Sir Cyril Abrahams, retired Chief Justice of Ceylon. He says, with a gentle smile, that he supposes I want someone who will be well liked by all parties, including those who are disadvantaged by his decisions. This being so, he thinks it only right to tell me that Abrahams was publicly burnt in effigy by an indignant crowd in the streets of Colombo!

Sir Nigel Campbell comes to ask my leave to go to the Ministry of Supply for a special job. He has been under-worked here, and has now no longer any coal duties, the new Regional Controller for Scotland being Lord Traprain, of whom, except that he is a nephew of Earl Balfour and is thought to be in the Navy and far out at sea, nobody seems to know anything. I agree to Sir N.C. going, but ask him to stay on as a Business Member, as Weir and Lee have done.

I ask Beale to recommend me someone to go into the question of supplies to small retail traders. Later he recommends Burleigh, whom I nominated on the panel on concentrating Insurance.

R.S.Edwards looks in and I introduce him to Sir A.O., who carries him off to explain about the Department. I think he will fit in all right, once he rubs the tips of some of his angles.

Kwapinski, who comes with Szapiro to pay his respects, as one Socialist Minister of Commerce to another, complains of a letter written by Gorvin, asking the Poles to advise on the feeding of the Germans after the war. I say I know nothing of this letter and shall be glad to have a copy. He will send me this together with a copy of the reply which he proposes to send, but which he has not yet submitted to the Polish Cabinet. (I hear later from D.Ward that Gorvin, who seems a first-class chump, did indeed - on the day when he was in command between the departure of L.R. to Washington and the assumption of his duties by D.W. - write a letter to all the exiled Governments bordering on Germany asking them for information on the "probable nutritional needs" of the latter after the war! This incredible gaffe caused great concern at the F.O. I said I was not surprised. Whatever we might decide to do, by way of relief.

-2-

(mood)

for the Germans later on, it is quite intolerable to propose to discuss it now with the victims whom they have stripped, tortured and starved. For my part my ~~move~~ was that no German should receive any food while any Pole remained hungry.

Kurt Lewin comes out to lunch with me. He is very bright and bustling.

In the Chair for 2½ hours at Labour Party Policy Cttee. when we discuss, with various outside visitors, the question of Labour Party policy and Youth. A very useful discussion. This we will consider again some weeks hence when M. Phillips has made a paper based on to-day's suggestions.

To W.L. by this evening's train. R. has been here for 4 or 5 days on leave.

25 and 26. 7. 42.

First, a lovely warm sunny day, with all meals out, and then a rather wet and cold one. Our crop of raspberries is a record one. Cut a lot of grass and make a bonfire.

27. 7. 42.

With R. back to London, she returning to Manchester to-morrow morning.

A day of minor interviews and further fidget over telegrams to L.R. in Washington, which I insist in breaking in two so that his proposed return to London for consultation is not linked with the fuss over the rationing declaration. This last has been played up too much. It is vexatious but not serious.

I have been having several consultations with Sir A.O. lately on re-arrangements near the top. I want two live wires, immediately under him, to take charge of home and external problems respectively. For the former I want Watkinson, and for the latter some outsider. Twentyman has been spoken of by H.G. and is in fact now in London. Over the weekend, owing to the stupidity of old Brand in Washington, Sir A.O. was rung up by the Treasury, who asked whether it was true that T. had been recalled in order to take a job at the B. of T. This was the first that A.O. had heard of any such

/possibility

possibility, and he naturally said no. I explain this morning that all that had happened was that Maude, of the Food Ministry, had told Brand that he had been asked whether T. would be available, if desired, as he understood that some changes were likely at the B. of T. I added that I myself did not remember ever having met T., but would take steps to do so while he was over here. Sir A.O. said that he had been the Treasury official in touch with the B. of T. before the war, and that he was certainly an able man, though he understood that he had quarrelled with Woolton and French at the Food Ministry, and he was now out of touch with B. of T. war developments. I said that I still held the view, which I had expressed to him early in my time here, that the B. of T. were a very slow and uninspiring lot. "There is no zzzip here", I said. He replied that much of the work here was necessarily dull and never reached me. There was a great mass of routine. Therefore, it was not to be expected that I should find quite the same interest here as either at the F.O. or M.E.W. I persisted, however, that I was dissatisfied and that we must have some new blood high up.

As to Watkinson, he was very anxious that Owen, who was his senior, should not be passed over. I said I thought that he might be sent to America or to represent us in Lyttelton's Dept. I also said I wished to get rid of Somervell, whom I found frightfully slow and lifeless. He said that S.'s health was not very good. I said that I would like to find something for him which would look like promotion but which would clear him out from the B. of T. My picture was that under Sir A.O. there should be two live wires, and that Hodgson should be left where he was for the time being, dealing, no doubt, quite competently with his relatively small technical field. Sir A.O. said that he would make enquiries about Twentyman, including his rank. He said that the Treasury did not much like the rank of Under-Secretary. I said that this was great nonsense, seeing how many Under-Secretaries they had, both at the F.O. and the Treasury. He replied that several of the so-called 'Under-Secretaries' at the F.O. had not really got that rank. (I ascertained later from G.J. that this was quite untrue.)

While Sir A.O. was talking with me about these matters, G.J. rang through on the telephone in reply to an earlier enquiry by me, to say that he was free to dine with me alone to-night. I told him later that this incident must have aroused Sir A.O.'s suspicions. On the whole, however, it is best, if he should have any suspicions, that he should think I was being incited by permanent Civil Servants outside the B. of T.

/G.J.

nod

G.J. and I dine at the Cosquille, where everybody is looking very ingratiating-shame-faced, after a recent conviction - a breach of food regulations. I tell him that I find many of the B. of T. officials frightfully slow and boring and that I am on the look-out for new blood. He does not know T. but suggests that I might like to consider either Lee of the Treasury, who, he says, is a tremendous worker, very energetic, pretty intelligent, and with a reputation for being generally offensive - I say I don't mind this at all - or bringing back Newell/Hall from Washington. I am inclined to like this less, since N.H. is one who specialises in disloyalty and is absurdly egoistic. He has, I think, on the whole done pretty well in Washington, and I recall that it was on G.J.'s suggestion that I sent him out there.

He says that Fraser makes a deplorable impression when representing the B. of T. at inter-Departmental meetings. J.M.K. and others simply make rings round him. He is not only stupid, failing to see any of the points, but, conscious no doubt of being no match for the representatives of other Departments, ineffectually rude as well.

We have a few words on the Rationing Declaration incident, and he says that, to mention "reconstruction" to the P.M., is like suggesting to an elderly uncle that he ought to be thinking about his will.

Returning after dinner, I am quite vexed at the very miscellaneous mass of business which I have to deal with, and the general failure to bring any of the matters now hanging about to a proper conclusion, as well as by the failure of most of the high officials to provide me with any stimulus at all. This business of stimulus, between a Minister and his officials, should not always be a one-way prod.

G.J. had talked at dinner about the series of important speeches recently made by leading Americans on post-war affairs. No-one at the B. of T. had directed my attention to these. And why the hell hadn't they?

DIARY

28. 7. 42.

Invite J.C.Burleigh, of McLintocks, recommended by Sir S.Beale, to enquire for me into (a) the facts, and (b) possible action, regarding alleged mal-distribution of supplies between large and small shops. He is a bit frightened of the job but accepts next day.

29. 7. 42.

Invite Wynne Parry to succeed Evershed. He has been recommended by du Parc, and is a typical Chancery silk. Rather pathetic; says that his health is bad - "only my wife and my doctor keep me going" - that he has no private means, two houses on his hands, many other commitments, has been invalided out of the Army, and must therefore make money by practice. I don't press him.

Miss Whitcomb

E.W. to lunch to discuss arrangements for her and J.W. to come to W.L. They are both looking forward to this very much.

Disgraceful scene in the House over Old Age Pensions. Shinwell makes a demagogic appeal which results in 49 Labour members repudiating poor old A.G., who had accepted an assurance by E.B., on behalf of the Govt., that further steps would be taken next session for improvement of old age pensions. The House, including a section of the Labour Party, has got into a shocking state of mind. The sooner they are dispersed, the better for all concerned.

*Generally like her
w/c
n/p*

Invite Tennyson, Chairman of my Utility Furniture Cttee., to dine with Thomas Sharp and Lady Colefax, who has written complaining that I did not put her on the Cttee. She has frequently entertained me to meals, so this seems an easy way out. I shan't, of course, put her, or anyone else, on. We have quite a "cultured" conversation about poets old and new, architecture, post-war planning, etc. But it goes on a bit too long.

30. 7. 42.

Invite J.H.Thorpe to succeed Evershed. Subject to the

/consent

consent of the Admiralty - where he is now P.A. to the Civil Lord - he accepts. This is a great relief, for I was getting rather bored with hawking this job round. He is a cheerful, hearty, Common Lawyer, rather a relief after Chancery impediments. He says that he and I had a debate at Owen's College in the 1920s, in which I painted a wonderful picture of the funeral of the Tory Party. He remembers that I said that Baldwin could not be the chief mourner because he would be inside the coffin. Thorpe was Conservative M.P. for Rusholme from 1919 to 1923. He will be pretty easy to get on with, I think, but I must watch that he is not too easy with the traders.

Lunch with H.G. to meet Twentyman. I like the latter, though he has a bit of a beard. But at any rate he shaves his cheeks! I broach with him, at the end of lunch, the question of coming to the B. of T., of which he has a very poor opinion. But I get the impression that he might be interested to come in to help to stir it up. The alternatives are that he should go back to Washington, either to go on with the Food Mission or as Chief of Staff to Sir R. Sinclair, Lyttelton's deputy.

Later, see representatives of the Film Trade Unions, and Matthias, who is very chagrined at the poor reception of his Retail Trade proposals. He asks whether I should object to his making some publicity for them, and removing misapprehensions. I say certainly not, provided he does it with tact.

31. 7. 42.

Binney reports progress by the Utility Furniture Cttee., who have had preliminary talks with the Timber Control - we shall have to make the best use of what little wood we can get - and have decided to ask for designs from 9 designers by August 24th. The Cttee. is working pretty well together as a team. Several of them are said to be "as pleased as punch" to be on this job.

Sir Horace (Munich) Wilson calls at my invitation to discuss reinforcement of B. of T. I say that I must have more **life** and energy near the top. I speak of Twentyman, and Sir H.W., though warning me that T. did not get on with French, nor later with Woolton, speaks well of his abilities. It is agreed that he shall speak to him. I say that I want a bifurcation under A.O. into Home and External, and want the new man to take the latter.

/Sir

-3-

Sir H.W. points out that I have Hodgson now as Second Secretary, so that, on the chart, bifurcation would be between him and the new man. On the other hand, Sir H.W. hints that the chart might not always require to be closely followed, and that bright, younger people might be discouraged by having to go up through Hodgson. I say that, in my view, exports and imports should balance, so as not to seem to diminish chances of promotion here, and I, therefore, would suggest that Owen, whom I regard as a good solid official though not inspired, might be provided for elsewhere to balance the newcomer. Sir H.W. seems to like this idea.

Afterwards I see Sir A.O. and tell him broadly where we are.

To W.L.

3. 8. 42 (Monday)

Back from W.L. this evening.

4. 8. 42

We are now in the last week of Parliament and I have quite a lot of P.Q.s, which go off more than usually well.

I then seek out Woolton and ask him for the release of Twentyman. He says that he would be quite willing. He adds that T., though very intelligent and just what I want as an energiser, has a difficult temperament. He has had a lot of grief in his private life and his nerves are not good. He used to sit up working too late at night, and this reduced his efficiency. He stimulated those below him but quarreled a lot with those above him. When the Blitz was on, he did not like it at all, and this was rather too obvious. W. will, however, write to Sir H.W. to-night and say that he is quite willing for ~~him~~ me to have T. He then proceeds to speak ill of French. He says that, soon after he came to the Ministry of Food, he told F. that he wanted it reorganised on certain lines. Three months passed and nothing happened. W. then said to F. that he was getting tired of waiting for his instructions to be carried out. F. said he must go and consult Sir H.W. W. said that indeed he must insist on his going to Sir H.W. and telling him that W. was getting very tired of waiting for the reorganisation. When F. saw Sir H.W., he asked

/"Did

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"Did Lord Woolton shout ^{at} you and tell you he ~~must~~ ^{was} be the Minister and must be obeyed?" F. said "No, he was very quiet". Sir H.W. replied "Then you are in mortal danger. You had better do it quick." And then, it seems, it was done!

W. also said that, after a few weeks, F. said to him "The right arrangement is that ideas should come up through the machine to you, but you are always sending ideas down through the machine. I am afraid this will lead to great confusion". W. said that, when he took on T., "I wanted to be stimulated". "That", I said, "is exactly my position. Stimulus between a Minister and his Department ought not to be all one way." W. said he had also said to F. "I know that you are trying to delay because you think I may not last very long as a Minister, then you may get somebody who will let you go on doing what you like."

Visit from Film Producers, and from Walter Nash, who is over on a short visit. He looks extremely fit and talks better than ever. He is a great little man. I feel quite an affection for him.

Later I go to the tail end of a most deplorable Party Meeting. The Admtve.Cttee. have recommended a resolution reaffirming confidence in A.G.'s leadership and laying it down that in future decisions must be taken on the floor of the House by the Leader. An attempt is made by the malcontents to have this motion put in two parts, they alleging that they are all in favour of the first part but that the second involves a criticism of those who voted against the Govt. last week. The proposal to divide, after much wrangling and shouting, is declared to be defeated by 45 to 32. Shinwell then challenges the vote, which was counted by S.L. and Hockley, and tellers are appointed to recount. But the second time the majority is rather larger, 50 to 31. The resolution as a whole is then carried by 66 to 4, a good few abstaining. This will look very satisfactory to the outer world. But I fear there will be a repetition soon. There are a lot of good demagogic wickets available, e.g., Servicemen's pay and allowances.

Frost to see me. He seems to take my appointment of Thorpe quite well.

After dinner rather a dreary meeting in my room of the Labour Party Post-War Finance Cttee. Douglas Jay and E.D. are

/missing

missing. Various further papers are ordered to be made!

5. 8. 42.

H.G. has this morning seen T., who has decided that he does not want to come to the B. of T., but to return to Washington and rejoin the Food Mission.

Sir H.W. calls for the second time, by arrangement, and tells me the same news. I pretend not to have heard it before. Sir H.W. says that they might, of course, order T. to come to the B. of T., and asks whether I would wish for this. I say no. I don't want an unwilling arrival. T., Sir H.W. says, states that, even when he was in touch with the B. of T. on behalf of the Treasury years ago, he always felt that food and agriculture, rather than trade and industry, were his real interests. I then ask Sir H.W. whether he has any other names to suggest. He mentions, in turn, Croft of the India Office, whom I say I remember as rather a dim character when he was Private Secretary to the Secretary of State years ago; Nixon, who, however, he admits is a difficult person and probably would not want to leave the U.K.C.C., where he is now very well paid; and Quintin Hill, who, he says, "knows all the ropes". I rule this last out absolutely, saying that I want someone who doesn't know the ropes. I then ask him about people at the Treasury. (T. had suggested to H.G. Wilson Smith and Woods, thinking that the former had the greater "stature" but the latter more "flash". Both, he thought, were good. With H.G. in the room, and before Sir H.W. arrived, I had rung up G.J. and asked whether he had a view about either. He said he knew them both slightly and regarded W.S. as quite first-class, and Woods as pretty good.) I, therefore, broach Wilson Smith to Sir H.W. He says that he is, indeed, very good, and has only just been promoted to be an Under Secretary in charge of Establishments. He would, therefore, be a natural person for Sir H.W. to consult in any case, since he will know who's who in all the Departments. Sir H.W. thinks that the Chancellor, whose Principal Private Secretary he was till recently, will be very unwilling to let him go. I ask casually about Woods, and Sir H.W. speaks well of him but says that he had to give up being Private Secretary because his health couldn't stand the late hours. This doesn't sound very promising! Sir H.W. will make further enquiries.

E.P.A. lunch to Nash, after which I catch K.W. and go back with him to No.11. I tell him that I am very much dissatisfied

/with

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with the top lot at the B. of T. and must have some new blood and live wires. He says that he greatly blames my predecessors for not having taken this up before. It is well known that the top of the B. of T. is very second-class. He will do his best to help me. I say that I would like W.S. He says that he is very good indeed and that he will see what can be done, though he can make no promises. I say that this must be regarded, not simply from the point of view of the interest of him as Chancellor for the time being, or me as President for the time being, but of improving the efficiency of the public service. He says he agrees.

See the Cinematograph Exhibitors. I have now seen three lots of people from the films and am beginning to sense the atmosphere a bit.

Conference on Retail Trade, with Burleigh present. Sketch out positive policy including (1) B.'s enquiry into distribution between different shops, (2) approach to Min. of Lab. to take away more mobile women from large shops, (3) wider use of Wartime Liabilities Adjustment Act, and (4) study of the possibility of sectional concentration, beginning perhaps with the tobacconists. I say that I don't think there is any prospect of putting through the recommendations of the Third Report, but C.W. thinks the opposition among the interests is less than I suppose and that we should try to do some education along this line. Finally I ask him to work out an amended scheme, which then we can try on the various interests.

Dinner to Nash - second meal with him to-day - at St Ermin's. Selection of members of N.E. and A.C. of Parliamentary Party. W.N. is in wonderful form. To illustrate his thesis that there are no inherently inferior races, he cites the Maoris, and the great progress they have made in recent generations. He tells a story of a Maori and a Scotsman disputing at Gisborne, on the east coast of the North Island, where the Maoris are very strong and a Maori was once elected to Parliament by white votes. The Maori said to the Scotsman "I am a better Scotsman than you are." "How is that?", asked the Scotsman. "My grandfather ate a Scotsman", said the Maori. And it was true!

6. 8. 42.

K.W. ~~calls~~ telephones that, immediately after I saw him

/yesterday

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yesterday, he sent for W.S., who felt that he had so recently taken on his present job, and that the work here would be so responsible and such new ground for him, that he preferred to continue where he was. K.W. added that he would do his best to find someone suitable for me. This is most unsatisfactory. The B. of T. has such a bad name, it seems, and is regarded as such a poor show at the top, that bright people are disinclined to come here!

Discussion on matches, which may be in very short supply this winter, and on my forthcoming visit to Manchester with Streat.

Dine at the Soviet Embassy, other guests being H.M., Dobbs, Laski, Dallas, and Burrows, who, I think, will turn out to be more use than most of our recent recruits in the T.U. section. After some general jaw, H.M. propounds to Maisky the idea of a Labour Party delegation to Moscow. He does it very well. Others follow up and M. replies that he will consult his Government, that his personal view is that such a visit would be valuable, but that, as we all agree, the time is not at present opportune.

We then drift off on to a discussion of the future of Germany, and the opinion is expressed that the Germans should be compelled to repair damage, particularly in Eastern Europe. Reparations should be not in money but in kind and in labour. In particular, they should hand over machine tools to those whose industry they have destroyed, and should send labour gangs, e.g., to repair the Dnieprostroy Dam. The view was also expressed that it was an unhealthy condition in Europe where Germany was very highly industrialised while the countries to the east of her were largely restricted to agriculture and extractive industries. All these countries should have their share of European industry, Also that the Ruhr should, in some form, be internationally controlled. M. said that he did not accept the view that Germany could not with advantage be broken up. When it was said that the result would be a long period of disordered struggle in order to re-unite the German tribes, he was not so sure. What would Europe look like 25 years hence? Possibly national rivalries would by then have been removed in some wide federation. There must be, if we were to avoid economic disaster, economic planning on a European scale. He then led the conversation in an anti-American direction. He criticised the proposal that the Relief Commission should be ~~centred~~ centred in Washington. America might be the Germany of to-morrow. It would have immense need to penetrate world markets with its exports. It was the kind of country which might easily go Fascist. The influence of Wall Street was likely to re-assert itself before long. All this was eagerly applauded by /little

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little Laski. I had to leave before the rest, and M., seeing me out, said that he was afraid the P.M. had got "an inferiority complex" about the British Army and this was why he was so reluctant to invade Europe. On the other hand, feeling in Russia regarding this country would be most adversely affected if we did not open a second front to help them very soon.

7. 8. 42.

L.P.Cttee. I put in a paper on Advertisements, proposing to cut the percentages allowed in the newspapers. It is concluded, however, that the best course would be to approach the papers and to say that, for shipping reasons, we must cut newsprint by about 23,000 tons a year. The best way to do this would be by printing fewer copies. K.W. and B.B. are to handle this. The War Cab. have agreed to a cut of some 200,000 tons a year of civilian raw materials and, as I point out, the choice may be between newsprint and wool, between fewer newspapers or a smaller clothing ration.

Dudley Ward comes round with a telegram for Leithers. He says that both the F.O. and the Treasury are now very concerned about the stage which the talks in the U.S. have reached. It is proposed that L.R. should come back "for a few days" for consultation and then return to Washington. I don't object to this. The American Departments are squabbling among themselves, and their draft scheme is a mass of unsatisfactory verbiage. Keynes is said to be interfering a great deal in trying to reverse previous decisions of Ministers. D.W. finds G.J. very good in the Economic Section at the F.O. He has become "much more human" since leaving M.E.W. When D.W. first heard that G.J. was to be his opposite number at the F.O., he was rather concerned, but he has now been quite reassured.

DIARY7. 8. 42 - 17. 8. 42.

At W.L. on leave. Of these 10 days, 8 are rainy, and it is impossible to have meals out of doors - the test of summer weather - till Saturday, the 15th. J. and E.W. to stay for the latter part of the time. I do much work in the garden, sleep a lot, and read no shop. The nearest approach is Dale's "Higher Civil Service", presented to me by H.G., which is amusing, instructive and sagacious, though a little old-fashioned.

17. 8. 42.

Back to London in the afternoon, just as the weather is becoming really good! Dine with H.G. and discuss the eternal personnel question. Caine has been suggested. He is certainly intelligent, though rather young. I will enquire further about him.

George Tomlinson told me, soon after he went to the Min. of Lab., that he used to go into the office early in the morning and write half a dozen of his most important letters in his own hand, and get them off before the Private Secretary arrived, so that the latter "didn't get to know too much".

I am told that Sir A. Duncan, when President, used to shout quite a lot at Sir A. Overton (I have never done this yet). Sir A.D. is said to have taken no interest in the work of the Board and to have been very chagrined during his second period here, having been pushed back by the Beaver from the Min. of Supply. He is said to have stopped all initiative by the officials and to have given way to all claims by every vested interest. "That man is a bloody coward, and probably a bloody crook as well", someone said of him, rather unkindly.

Maisky, at our recent dinner party at his Embassy, said that he would only believe in a Communist revolution in Germany. Any other sort would be humbug.

18. 8. 42.

Sir H. d'Egville calls, on the eve of his return to North America. He is anxious that I should head the E.P.A. delegation to

/Canada

-2-

Canada. He says that both the Speaker and Amery wish this, and that Cripps said that it would be an admirable arrangement. He has not yet seen C.R.A., and I advise him to do so. I say that I could not possibly go in the near future, and it is very doubtful whether I should go even in the spring, though it is difficult to see far ahead. It would be desirable that my mission, if I went, should be connected with my departmental work, and it is not easy to work such talks in.

Take Wilson Smith out to lunch and pump him on possible reinforcements at the top of the B. of T. He is very good and very quick, but says that, from the selfish point of view, he would not care to come himself as it was much paraded that he had been promoted very young to take charge of all Establishments, and it would be said that something had gone wrong, if he moved too soon. When I say that I have heard well of Woods, Lee and Playfair, he says that these are the three on whom people are always fixing their eyes. He argues that the Treasury have exported lately to the limit, and that they are very thin underneath. Most of their Heads will be retiring in a year or two. The outcome of our talk is that Liesching, of the D.O., is the best man available. Middle forties, energetic, intelligent, knowing something of external economics, and having set up three offices of British High Commissioners in Dominions, which was quite a new show. On the other hand, he may be very difficult to get, as he is spoken of as the one rising light of the D.O. I tell W.S. that I am speaking to-morrow to the Chancellor and will follow this up. Of other names suggested, Caine is too young, only an A.S. and, W.S. thinks, "if you take him away from his papers, he may not have quite the assurance to hold his own." W.S. also mentions Mullins, but says that he thinks the B. of T. would take his appointment very ill, though he has many of the qualities I want, especially drive.

Overton, whom I see just before lunch, says that he came up one day last week to see Sir H.J.W., and from their conversation three names emerged; Jenkins, ex-B. of T., now with War Transport and almost certainly unobtainable; Liesching, and Sir Lindsay Scott, now No. 3 at M.A.P. This is their order of merit. A.O. says that he is very sorry we have missed Twentyman. He said to Sir H.J.W., and I say to W.S. to-day, that I would like to export one good man for every good man I import. Owen, we think, might well go as Chief of Staff to Sir R. Sinclair in Washington, if the

/latter

latter fails, as he probably will, to get Twentyman.

Reconstruction Cttee. Portal trying to force an issue between himself and the Paymaster as to which should be, in effect, Minister of Planning. The whole meeting rather huggemugger, since we are supposed to be discussing the Scott Report, which only came out last week, and the Uthwatt Report, which is not coming out till next week, but a few paragraphs of an extract from which are circulated round the table. Agreed that Ministers shall consider this question, meeting in the middle of next month.

H.G. to dine, and tell him about L., who, he agrees, sounds promising. I ask him to do some scouting about this new discovery before to-morrow evening.

Read, before going to bed, a paper by Meade and H.G. on Commercial Union. This is quite bright, though with some little defects, and ties up pretty well with the paper on the Clearing Union. (I discuss this with H.G. next morning and agree that I will put it round to the officials, with a laudatory Minute, so that it shall emerge as a B. of T. official paper. This will be better than a Ministerial paper, since it is rather free trade and might, therefore, provoke outbursts from more than one quarter.

19. 8. 42.

See K.W. about personnel here. He thinks Liesching is the best man available. I will tackle C.R.A. about him to-night, and K.W. says that he will do his best to help me to get him. We are at No. 11 Downing Street and it is a sunny morning. We look out through the open window into the garden at the back. There is no-one there. K.W. says "Ah, I have seen a lot of Prime Ministers walking about there among the flowers, and there were flowers for them in the end." He has served in each of the Baldwin Governments, and also under Macdonald, Chamberlain and the present P.M. He says that Keynes and Henderson and others are always "running in" to him and saying "Why don't you do so and so?" I say that not enough do this at the B. of T. I hear that they say at the Treasury "You will never do much with that little fool."

Take G.J. out to lunch and ask him about L. Very

/favourable

-4-

favourable. He is able and much respected, though not "superlatively amusing" and inclined to retire in the evening to the company of his wife in Hampstead. I ask if he can hold his own in a battle of wits with the Treasury and the F.O. G. says yes. He is inclined to be earnest and speak with passion about the Commonwealth. He thinks that I should like him.

He says that Maisky came in the other day and declaimed at great length to A.E. against Wall Street and the Americans generally. I said this was the same as I had had at the Soviet Embassy the other night. G. thinks that there may be a repetition at the end of this war of the situation at the end of the last, with the United States taking the same attitude towards Germany that we took then, and we taking the same attitude as the French took then, both as to security and reparations. He thinks it quite possible that the Germans will fly into pieces and that the westerners in particular will rush into our arms asking to be saved from both Prussians and Russians. The argument might be used that, in order to get reparations out of Germany, we must hold her together. This, he thinks, would be a great mistake.

To-day there is news of our big Raid on Dieppe. This enables me to write a short note to Lucas, saying, in monosyllables, how responsive is H.M.G. to suggestions!

Discuss appointments with A.O. and tell him that I am trying to winkle Liesching out of the Dominions Secretary this evening. He likes this idea. I leave over till to-morrow other consequential questions.

C.R.A. to dine at the Lansdowne. He gives me an impression of greater strength and on-the-spotness than recently. Perhaps acting as P.M., with the Labour Party scattered and Parliament up, makes him feel better. He says the Raid went very well and we certainly destroyed many more of their aircraft than we lost of our own. But enemy losses are difficult to check exactly, since the Air Force always "count every feather", whereas the Admiralty count nothing unless it is quite visibly "in the bag".

He talks a bit about the changes in the military command in the Middle East. The Auk has been a great disappointment lately. We have been urging him to attack, but it is impossible to give too many orders from Whitehall to the Commander in the field. He certainly missed a great opportunity of counter-attacking Rommel when he was first halted, when his troops were at their weariest, before his lines of communication had been put in order or reinforcements had reached him from across the sea. But that

/chance

-5-

chance was missed. Our Staff are always wanting to wait another week until they have completed their own preparations, forgetting that the enemy is doing the same.

Garro was personally picked by O.L., who thought him the best of the available House of Commons bunch, better than any Tory. C.R.A. could not have pressed for this post to be given to us, as he has already increased our quota much above what arithmetic entitles us to. The Tories, no doubt, will be very sick, but Garro is likely, we both agree, to do well.

Passing to my own affairs, I lead up, without much circumlocution, to a request for the transfer of L. He says that he has already heard that this was coming. He adopts, on the whole, quite a forthcoming attitude, and says that, though L. is his best man, he does not think that any Minister should stand in the way of the promotion of a good Civil Servant, even if it means moving to another Department. He asks for an assurance that if L. comes to me, he will be No.2 to A.O. I say that this is my intention. He asks me to put my request on paper, which, later that evening, I do.

20. 8. 42.

H.S. H. Johnson

Receive, with ~~H.S.~~ and A.O., Sir Francis Joseph, who, in Swinton's absence, is to act as Chairman of the U.K.C.C. He is accompanied by J.Hambro. We tell them that the U.K.C.C. seems to have made itself rather unpopular in the Middle East, but they reply that this is largely due to the need to hustle supplies into Russia, regardless of treading on various people's toes. In Portugal, they say, they now have a better staff, I having commented on the mis-handling, at one stage, both of wolfram and sardines. Some talk of the displacement of "existing channels", on which I am more sympathetic to them than most of their critics. I am not much in love with "existing channels". (Next day Walter Nash makes a public reference to our tendency at present to be too "loyal to existing channels" and old trade customs.) I say that they should do whatever is most necessary to win the war, and that afterwards we shall have to consider what instruments of export trade are most effective. It may well be, in my view, that the U.K.C.C., or something like it, should continue as a permanency,

Poor old Craig-Henderson toddles in to see me about his

/Retail

Retail Trade Committee. He has no grip at all. He says that he once had a talk with "Mr Duncan"..... then he hesitates, and is not sure whether he has got the name right. I say "Sir Andrew Duncan?" He says "Oh yes, yes, Sir Alexander ... no, I mean Sir Andrew." I encourage him to do nothing for the present. He is much hurt at the way in which critics have assailed his Report. He does not think that many retailers have read it. He would have supposed, he said, that every retailer would have got a copy and read it carefully. I don't tell him too much of what I am doing, except that I am making certain enquiries and collecting certain evidence. I gather that he was pleased to see me. I say that we must have another talk later on.

DIARY21. 8. 42 - 24. 8. 42

To W.L., where the Wilmots still are with Miss Stone and Olive, who is a very good cook. A very pleasant weekend, including much fun with Adco, of which J.W. has prepared large quantities to enable me to turn my grass and rubbish, infused with lots of chalk, into lovely manure a year from now. They have had quite a good break down here after their bad blitz experiences in Norwich.

24. 8. 42

Take the Mexican Minister out to lunch. This at the suggestion of Viscount Bennett, I don't quite know why. He is a not very exciting little man and hasn't anything particular to say. He dwells a bit, as is proper in talking to a Labour Minister, on the Left-wing achievements of the Mexican Government, and, as to any British Minister, on the high grounds of principle, rather than material interest, on which they have entered the war, and of the much greater size of their population - 20 millions - as compared with those of other perhaps better-known countries.

Tennyson comes to show me drawings and models of Utility furniture. Some of these are quite good. I impress upon him that he must have mass production of selected standard designs, of which, of course, there might be several. If once we let the manufacturers begin to amuse themselves, we had just as well not have started. He sees all this quite clearly and is, I think, quite a diplomat in a quiet way and will get his colleagues where he and I want them.

Christopher Mayhew comes to take me out to dinner and tells me about Dieppe. A lot of his Company were in it, and he just missed being detailed for it on the ground that his training had not been quite long enough. He takes a rather gloomy view of the operation. In the centre, he says, it was just a massacre, and there was a muddle at one of the other landing places. The only place where they did well was where, under Lovat, they put out of action the German battery and radio location station. This was well done. And so, of course, was the air. The Germans here were taken quite by surprise, and it was three hours before any of their Fighters, and six hours before any of their Bombers, appeared on the scene. Our ground troops, however, came

-2-

up against great obstacles. Our tanks got stuck against a sea wall. Our objectives had included the whole town of Dieppe itself and something considerably further inland. These, of course, were not reached at all. On the other hand, the Canadians in particular were delighted, having for several years had no-one to fight except the Guards and the local inhabitants of places where they were billeted. The morale of all those returning from the other side, some of whom he met on arrival, was magnificent. No doubt important lessons have been learned for another time.

He then gave me an account of an evening with Cripps and his family. He ran into John Cripps, whom he had known at Oxford, and was asked to go along. He was the only outsider present. The rest were Cripps, his wife, son, Personal Assistant (David Owen) and some other hanger-on. The whole conversation was whether Cripps should resign or not and if, as Cripps appeared to take for granted, the P.M. fell, who should succeed him and what Cripps should do in that event. Should he or should he not serve under Eden? This was discussed at great length. I said to C.M. that it all sounded a most nauseating, egoising performance, and quite remote, in nearly all its calculations, from probabilities. He agreed. He said that, when asked what he thought, he said, flat-footedly, "~~Of course~~ when you came back from Moscow, you had quite a mystique, but of course you have lost most of that now and I suppose, if you stay on in the Government, you will soon lose the rest." Cripps seemed to agree, and this, C.M. thinks, is really the reason why he is always fidgeting about wondering whether he ought not to try to improve his personal position by resigning. He told them that the chief reason why he didn't resign was because he didn't want to let the Beaver in, and that the Beaver was working away to form a Peace Party which would come into action "when Russia collapsed". I told C.M. that I thought this was all a farrago of nonsense. There was no reason at all why the P.M. should fall; there was no-body to take his place; even if he met with an accident, I did not for a moment believe that either Eden or Cripps would be asked to replace him, but much more probably Anderson. Nor did I see where the Beaver and his Peace Party were going to gain much strength. Nor did I think that Russia would collapse. So there was really no point of contact anywhere between Cripps's reflections and reality. Cripps also said that he thought that Shinwell should be in the War Cabinet! Also that he was afraid that, after the war, our politics would revert to pre-war Party lines. He would much prefer the formation of a new Progressive Party, which, those

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present understood, he would lead. C.M. asked how this Party was to be composed, and who would now follow Cripps. He said "Chiefly some of the more progressive Conservatives in the House." I told C.M. that I had heard a little while ago, from Maurice Webb, that Cripps had been had along to an evening gathering of a group of about 30 Conservatives, who led him on and persuaded him that they all thought the same as he did and would like him to be their leader. He sucked all this up and, at the end of the meeting, said that they must all meet again soon. When he had left, there was much laughter at his expense. E.B. told me a few days later that this same lot had asked him along and tried to tell him the same tale. But he had said "You can't catch an old dog like me as easily as that. I am not Stafford Cripps!"

25. 8. 42.

Introduce Thorpe to his colleagues on the Central Price Regulation Committee.

Call from Sir Theodore Gregory, as he is now known. I had not seen him for quite a long time, and he is much more cheerful than of old and in quite good form. Whereas he always used to seem to feel himself very inferior to most of his surroundings, he has been feeling so bloody superior to the Indians out in India that he wears now quite a happy aspect. He says that all Englishmen in India now agree that the only thing to do with these hopeless people is to come out and let them go to hell their own way. This cannot be done during the war, but should be done as soon as possible afterwards. The Moslems have a perfect case for Pakistan, since the Hindus simply do them down by mental agility as well as by superior numbers. His only doubt about Pakistan is whether there are enough really intelligent Moselms to make it work at all. He says that the Indian capitalists are the worst of their kind anywhere in the world. They have no interest in their country, nor in any abstract aims, but only in making money. Gandhi's latest move, including his statement that he would be willing to negotiate with the Japs, is due to the attitude of Indian capitalists controlling Congress, which has become a mere job-trust. The Indian capitalists are most emphatically opposed to any scorched earth policy which would reduce their profits. Subhas Bose, now ostentatiously with the Nazis, has been known by every well informed person in India for some time to be a Quisling. But, in spite of this, when there was a rumour a few months ago that he had been killed in an air crash, Gandhi sent a much publicised message of sympathy to his wife. There is no doubt that Congress

/leaders

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leaders are quite prepared to appease the Axis. All their support in America is gone. Gregory says that no-one in the B. of T. seems to be thinking at all about post-war trade and the importance of securing, from the start, exports of machinery, etc., to the Dominions and India, so as to bind them to us, even, as in the case of India, against her sentiments, and the consequential retardation of British industrial re-equipment.

Sturrock, a not very bright South African Minister, comes to see me and brings with him, amongst others, Liesching. I arrange for the latter to stay behind, and broach with him the possibility of his coming here. He is correct and guarded, but I think would be attracted. I say I hope he will come. (I learn that that day he lunches with A.O., and several days later seeks out G.J. and asks him about me. "Of course, I cracked you up", said he, "and told him he mustn't be frightened of you. He seemed quite surprised to hear that you were really quite human." Who, I wonder, has been expatiating to him upon my inhumanity?)

I put to H.G. to-night the possibility, suggested by A.O., that he might be P.A.S. in succession to Nowell and under Watkinson. This would be subject to my still having a call on him, within reasonable bounds, for special jobs. The alternative would be to remain an A.S. and my P.A. and to take over all Reconstruction. (Next morning, having thought it over, he says he thinks he would be a fool to refuse once more the possibility of P.A.S. I tell him I think he is right, and that it would be quite easy to make all sorts of adjustments to suit both him and me and the work.)

26. 8. 42.

Attain the Elder Statesman-like age of 55. I feel, however, fitter than I should, when younger, have thought possible in such old age.

Beale comes with a project from the Business Members for a White Paper on post-war industry, including some propositions about Trade Associations, authoritative, and later on to become compulsory, bodies. This must be handled gingerly, and some time wasted. I agree with him that in about a fortnight's time I shall have a further talk with him and others on the matter. After that, and he agrees, it will be necessary for officials

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here, and from other Departments, and then for my Ministerial colleagues - if the thing turns out badly I can get it killed, no doubt, by them at that stage - to have a sniff at it.

Low on Bernales. J.W. and H.G. both think that we should prosecute, and I push Low along to the extent of ~~int~~roducing a draft letter from me to the A.G., asking that the excuse that civil proceedings were taking place should no longer be allowed to delay criminal proceedings.

H.J. on his proposed inter-Allied-Government Conference. I agree to this on condition that he himself talks only generalities and that, after all the others have said their piece, he should merely say that H.M.G. will take careful account of what they have said and consider whether some of the matters raised cannot be further pursued in sub-committees.

Go in the evening to the Fabian Summer School at Frensham and am duly lionised. I give them a long talk in the form of reflections of a Labour Minister after two and a half years in office in this Government. After that I sit up with them answering a lot of questions. Not too bad a bunch.

27. 8. 42.

Press Conference on Clothes Rationing, in which I explain that, for shipping and supply reasons, clothing coupons must be spun out, so that the second lot must last for $5\frac{1}{2}$ months instead of $4\frac{1}{2}$, and it may be necessary to extend the 14-month period during which existing rations were to run. I emphasise, however, the special advantages to be bestowed on children and industrial workers, and the press takes it all very well. I say that we shall soon have no more hats and that everyone with natural hair should go about without one. This also is well received. (Cunliffe sends me a short minute asking whether I also think that those with beards should go about without collar and tie. I say that this is a bright thought which I will propound later.)

Lunch alone with MacGowan in his private room at his office. He is very hard boiled but we both feel, I think, that each might be useful to the other. He evidently likes to keep in close touch with Ministers and, in the course of our talk, asks me to get a Knighthood for one of his Directors. In return I ask him to turn his experts on to making me a report as to how the German war potential can be bust up after the war.

/Keynes

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27. 8. 42.

Press Conference on Clothes Rationing, in which I explain that, for shipping and supply reasons, clothing coupons must be spun out, so that the second lot must last for 5½ months instead of 4½, and it may be necessary to extend the 14-month period during which existing rations were to run. I emphasise, however, the special advantages to be bestowed on children and industrial workers, and the press takes it all very well. I say that we shall soon have no more hats and that everyone with nat ural hair should go about without one. This also is well received. (Cunliffe sends me a short minute asking whether I also think that those with beards should go about without collar and tie. I say that this is a bright thought which I will propound later.)

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/Keynes

(only 3 years before he became my advisor at the Treasury)

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Keynes (Jeremiah Malthus, as we used to call him) - now a Baron on the Board of the Bank - comes to talk to me about cotton. Very bright and stimulating, as always. But he and I both know that neither of us much cares for the other.

It is now suggested that I should take control of book publishing in addition to everything else. O. Peake, as Chairman of the Committee which has been looking into this, comes to broach it to me this afternoon. I say that I am not eager, but, if pressed, will accept, though I should not want to trail along after the issue of an "exhortation" to the publishers which he is drafting. I say that it would be much better for me to have them in to see me, talk to them in my own way, and afterwards issue a press statement.

Dine with Lady Colefax and am somewhat run after by persons interested in the films. Knickerbocker, the American journalist, just arrived from some war front, wants coupons for a new suit. Morton, whom I have not seen for some time, talks most unguardedly to me about the P.M.'s visit to Moscow and Middle East. He always dramatises and exaggerates, but his tale is as follows.

In the M.E. the morale of all our people was most deplorable. The Auk had completely lost confidence in himself. Everybody was always looking over their shoulders towards prepared positions to which to retreat. The units at the Front were hopelessly mixed up, and there was no evidence of good staff work. The Auk had 180 Generals on his staff. This number has now been reduced to 30 by his successor. We should, of course, have hit Rommel hard when he had reached his furthest point of advance. The P.M. and the C.I.G.S. both went up to the line and followed different routes, and met that evening to compare notes. "Both", said D.M., "came back with faces like boots". They were both convinced that drastic and speedy action must be taken. Already there has been a very great improvement. But it was only just in time. (Alexander, the Auk's successor, has hitherto been in charge of brilliant retreats. He was the last man off the beaches at Dunkirk and since then he has done Burma. Williams Thompson, who sat next to me at dinner, and is on the staff of Mountbatten, said that he thought the appointment of a man with this record, good though it was of its kind, would have a very bad effect, since it would be generally assumed that we were going to repeat Dunkirk and Burma in Egypt. (G.J., whom I brought back afterwards to talk alone, said that he heard that Alexander was a typical brave, brainless Guardsman, with

/beautifully

Frank
Makin
Mike

beautifully burnished boots. When some junior officer rushed up to him at Dunkirk and said "Sir, the situation has become quite catastrophic", Alexander said "I don't understand these long words". G. also said that Casey had blotted his copy book badly in Cairo by completely getting the wind up when Rommel was advancing, and issuing all sorts of notices advising flight. Indeed, Mrs Casey had flown away in an aeroplane, but Lady Lampson had angrily refused to go with her.)

D.M. then talked about the visit to Moscow. He said that on the first day the Russians could not have been nicer and everything seemed going very well. On the second, everything changed and they were violently offensive, declared that we were doing nothing to help them, that we always betrayed all our allies, that we had never done any good in land fighting, and that it was a bloody disgrace that we hadn't opened a second front in Western Europe long ago. Whereupon, said D.M., reporting the version of Rowan, the P.M.'s Private Secretary who was with him, the P.M. launched into a superb philippic and denounced the Russians with even greater ardour than Stalin had denounced us. What had they been doing, he demanded, when we were fighting alone to save the liberties of the world? They had been supplying warlike goods in great quantities to the enemy and half hoping for our defeat. Why were they in the war at all? Only because they had been pushed into it and couldn't help themselves. Would they even have held out as long as this if we had not supplied them with large quantities of tanks and other arms? The result was a complete and immediate reconciliation. Stalin rose and said "I know now that I have been speaking to a real man. Let us go away together and have some drinks." So off they went, alone with interpreters, to Stalin's private house, and talked from midnight till 5 in the morning. The P.M. had been able to tell Stalin a good deal which much interested him about things that might happen in the not far distant future. D.M. said that the P.M. and the others thought very highly of Timoshenko and several other Russian Commanders. But there was a queer phoney political feeling always in the background. They did not see the Politburo, but they had the impression that Stalin went to and fro between it and them, and that his power was by no means so great as some supposed. On their first arrival in the Kremlin, one of his staff said to the P.M., while they were waiting for the Russians to come in, that almost certainly there was a listening apparatus in the wall, so he must be careful. The P.M. said "We will soon deal with that. The Russians, I have been told, are not human beings at all. They are lower in the scale of nature than the

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orang-outang. Now then, let them take that down and translate it into Russian."

W.Thompson told me that Gubbins had now been promoted Major General.

[It was a lie!]

28. 8. 42.

Thorpe makes his first appearance at a conference with Wholesale Textile Association, who want wider margins. Frost seems quite reconciled to doing most of the detail for the present.

Sir R.Hopkins comes to see me this afternoon, at my request, to discuss Higher Staff. There is no difficulty with the Treasury about Liesching - I have now written a letter to C.R.A., following a conference between Overton and Machtig, which I think meets all the conditions put up from the D.O. - but there is a reluctance, Hopkins says, at the Treasury to agree to more "Under-Secretaries" as distinct from "Second Secretaries". The point, which is quite a sensible one, is that you don't want to make the train stop at an extra station, i.e., you don't want to interpose a new official between the Second Secretary, on the one hand, and the P.A.S. on the other. I say that as regards Watkinson, my picture is that he will take charge of all the very important home front stuff and that papers will go direct from him to Overton and not via either of the Second Secretaries. The logical answer to the Treasury objection on grading would, therefore, be that W. should be made, not an Under-Secretary, but an additional Second Secretary. This would mean the retirement at an early date of Hodgson, which, in itself, is not needful, since he is expert in a limited field and does not operate outside it. I should, of course, have no objection to 3 ~~Under-Secretaries~~, if the Treasury would prefer this. I point out, however, to Hopkins that before the war the Treasury agreed to two Second Secretaries plus two Under-Secretaries at the Board of Trade, and that, though one of the latter did Shipping, which we have now lost, we have got in exchange all these new home front developments - controls, concentration, rationing, price regulation, utility production, etc. These, I tell H., give me much more political trouble than anything else since I parted with coal. He is very sympathetic on this and says that it is most essential to maintain controls, etc., after the war, and that whoever is President then will have an even more difficult job with them than I have now. When I say that if

Second

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there is any objection from the Treasury point of view to my present proposals, this means that the Treasury must have been wrong before the war, he says, with a smile, "The Treasury never admits that they were ever wrong." He is a nice little man, with a very good brain and a sense of humour. As regards Somervell, he is rather attracted by the idea that he should be chiefly used for work in Washington, spending at least six months a year there, where his agreeable personal qualities will matter more, and his defects of energy and intellect will matter less than when he is always on our backs here.

I afterwards tell all this to A.O., and ask him to make every effort to fix everything up before I come back from Manchester next week, including the case of Owen, whom I also recommended to Hopkins for promotion outwards into any production job. A.O. says that Owen and Watkinson are both Welshmen and that the former would never work under the latter.

H.G. thinks that the fact that I half exploded at A.O. the other day over all this and said "I won't have any more beating about the bush" has had a good effect. A.O. has a deep dislike of what he calls "disagreeable interviews", and therefore the way to make him face up to disagreeable interviews with his subordinates is to create the impression that, if he doesn't, he will have much more disagreeable interviews with me.

29. 8. 42.

Trouble in the press in the case of one Nygate, who, it is alleged, was "enticed" by a B. of T. inspector to break the law. Send for Low and tell him to have an immediate enquiry made into this and other cases where the very clear instructions issued last May are not being obeyed. I afterwards make a Minute (attached)*. Later in the day the P.M.'s Secretary asks for a note on the case. Simmonds is very quick and good in dealing with these matters and gets the Evening News to say that I have already ordered an enquiry. Spend the afternoon and evening at Datchet with the Two Old Ladies.

* President's Minute No. 29.

PRESIDENT'S MINUTE NO.29.

I have spoken today to Sir Stephen Low regarding the report in today's press of the Nygate case, which follows swiftly upon Mr Harold Nicolson's story in last week's Spectator, which has provoked further correspondence in this week's issue.

It is most vexatious that these agent provocateur tactics are still being continued - if indeed they are - in view of the very clear instructions which I gave more than *three* months ago and on which I based answers to questions in Parliament on June 23rd. Not only am I personally embarrassed in Parliament and elsewhere, but prejudice is created both against the personnel and the policy of the Board of Trade.

I have asked Sir Stephen Low to hold an immediate inquest into the Nygate case, and to have a report ready for me when I return from Manchester next week. I understand that the Parliamentary Secretary has already written to Mr Nicolson inviting him to furnish names and addresses to substantiate his Spectator story.

Mr Simmonds has already displayed much promptness and gumption in dealing with the press on these two incidents, and has secured the publication in this week's Outfitter of an extract from the instructions issued, months ago, on my authority, to Enforcement Officers. I hope, therefore, that we may be able to minimise the adverse effects of such publicity as has already taken place. On the other hand, Sir Stephen Low tells me that he is apprehensive that the line adopted by Mr Alban Gordon, Counsel for the Defence in the Nygate case, may now be followed in a large number of other prosecutions which are now in train.

I must very frankly say that seldom a day passes which does not disclose to me fresh evidence of inefficiency somewhere or other in the Board of Trade. I cannot always be writing minutes on these cases, nor elevating them into first-class issues. But, as I have frequently observed in other connections, I am sure that many parts of our machine want tuning up, and I add, not for the first time, that I believe that it would have a beneficial influence on all concerned, if some of those primarily responsible for needless delays, stupidities and disregard of orders, were to be removed, without undue concealment, from the employment of the Board of Trade.

I have told Sir Stephen Low that if it should be established that any of my Enforcement Officers have either in the Nygate case or in any other, been acting in disobedience of my instructions issued last June, I give full authority for their immediate dismissal. The Minister of Labour will soon find some less skilled employment for them.

When Mr Yandell was appointed, I hoped for a great improvement both in the results, and in the methods of enforcement. He is evidently, by reason of his experience, more qualified to direct these operations than my Accountants, who are still, I understand, principally domiciled at Bournemouth. I wish to be

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informed whether Mr. Yandell has yet taken effective charge of these operations. I spoke to him, soon after he came to the Board, on this question of agents provocateurs, and found him, as was naturally to be expected, most averse to such clumsy amateurishness.

Sir Arnold Overton

29th August, 1942.

I have asked Sir Stephen Low to hold an immediate inquiry into the Wygate case, and to have a report ready for me when I return from Manchester next week. I understand that the Parliamentary Secretary has already written to Sir Nicholson inviting him to furnish names and addresses to substantiate his spectator story.

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR VISIT TO MANCHESTER BY
THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE
SEPTEMBER 1 - 4, 1942.

Monday, August 31st.

- 2.32 p.m. Arrive Manchester (London Road) by train from Euston.
Visit to Mr Frank Platt's house (tennis).
- 8.0 p.m. Supper with Sir Raymond and Lady Streat at Wilmslow.
- Night. At Wilmslow.

Tuesday, September 1st.

10. 0 a.m. Inspection and Opening of Exhibition of War Products of the Cotton Industry held in Colour, Design and Style Centre.
- 10.45 a.m. Headquarters of British Overseas Cottons Ltd. for informal conference with Acting Chairman, Mr Arthur Hollas, Mr Platt, Sir Raymond Streat, etc.
- 11.30 a.m. Conference with Cotton Board.
1. 0 p.m. Luncheon Midland Hotel with members of the Cotton Board and leaders of principal organisations in the Cotton Industry (25 to 30 in all). Informal discussions after lunch.
4. 0 to
6.45 p.m. Free.
- 6.45 for
7. 0 p.m. Private dinner by Lord and Lady Mayoress at Town Hall.
- Night. Midland Hotel.

Wednesday, September 2nd.

- 9.30 a.m. Leave Hotel for a visit to a cotton spinning mill.
- 11.30 a.m. General meeting of members Manchester Chamber of Commerce and other leading organisations. Chairman: Mr Frank Longworth, President of the Chamber. Probable attendance 500-600. Speech by President, vote of thanks by Lord Mayor.
1. 0 p.m. Luncheon by Mr Frank Longworth to meet leading business men (30 to 35 persons).
3. 0 p.m. Informal conference with representative business men invited by Mr Longworth (12 to 18).
- 4.15 p.m. Tea and informal conference with Chairman (Mr R.A.Carpenter) and leading members of the Merchants' Association (8 to 10).

5.30 to
7. 0 p.m. Meet Labour Party leaders at Midland Hotel.
Dinner Sir Thomas and Lady Barlow, at Didsbury.
Night Midland Hotel.

Thursday, September 3rd.

9. 0 a.m. Leave Hotel for visit to weaving mill.
11. 0 a.m. Private conference with leaders of Cotton Industry Trade Unions arranged by Mr Andrew Naesmith.
1. 0 p.m. Lunch with C.W.S. Directors, Balloon Street.
2.45 p.m. Conference with spinners' and manufacturers' organisations arranged by Mr W.H. Wiggins, President, Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' Associations Ltd., and Sir John Grey, Chairman, Cotton Spinners' and Manufacturers' Association.
4.45 p.m. Visit to Wythenshawe Housing Estate with Sir Raymond Streat, followed by visit to the National Trust woodlands in Styal. Return to Midland Hotel.
6.45 p.m. Dinner - by Sir Raymond and Lady Streat, Midland Hotel.

Friday, September 4th.

Morning Left free for the further interviews or conferences rendered desirable by circumstances.
12.30 p.m. Sir Raymond Streat and Mr Frank Platt to lunch. Midland Hotel.
2.15 p.m. Leave for London by the 2.15 train from London Road Station - arrive Euston 6.24 p.m.

DIARY31. 8. 42 to 4. 9. 42.

Visit to Manchester, accompanied by Preston. Programme is shown on separate sheet. The visit was, I think, well worth while. I learned a good deal, chiefly by absorbing as I went along, and listening to a series of people talking, each in a slightly different way, about the same problems. Also many of the leading cotton people, who had never seen me before, and had only heard evil rumours concerning me, were, I think, faintly reassured to find me, after all, relatively human. Streat was most assiduous, dancing attendance always, except when there was some special diplomatic reason for his absence. He is intelligent and subtle. Of quite a different type is the other key man, Frank Platt. Very Lancashire, very self-made, very direct, very dynamic, not caring if he is hated, doing a big job really well - a more difficult job than Streat's. He, however, comes directly under Duncan, as Streat under me. I had been warned that cotton was as bad as coal. It is not quite true. I saw nowhere quite such a wicked-looking face amongst the employers as that of old Evan Williams. The worst element I found was among the merchants, or some of them. Pardoe is a pretty bad piece of work. On the other hand, I took quite a liking to Wood, who is fresh, quick and young. The Trade Union leaders are not very exciting. But why should one expect them to be? In contrast with the miners' leaders, they are divided not on geographical lines - South Wales v. Durham v. Yorkshire - but on sectional lines within Lancashire. But here too I was agreeably surprised to find one or two keen and promising younger men.

Throughout my visit I asked all those connected with the cotton industry to produce practical plans and proposals, "blue prints", for post-war arrangements in the industry and especially for the export trade. I also listened patiently to a great deal of talk and said how interesting it all was, and made quite a number of speeches of varying degrees of length and light relief. The only immediate practical step which was pressed upon me, especially by Streat and Platt, was the appointment of a small committee to enquire into conditions of future recruitment for the industry - somewhat on the lines of the Forster Committee on recruitment to the mines, jointly appointed by Bevin and myself - and also into wage arrangements within the industry. This proposal was first made to me by Roberts, one of the younger Trade Union leaders, and supported by others. I explained to S. and P. that it

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was a little delicate, since the Ministry of Labour would naturally be concerned with such enquiries. Probably it would again have to be a joint appointment by me and E.B. In that case he might have troublesome ideas about personnel. I shall first have a word with George Tomlinson about it. He is expected to be friendly and might prepare the way with E.B.

Here follow a few notes on the programme.

31. 8. 42.

Platt has what is reputed to be the best hard tennis court in Lancashire. I play four sets, two pretty long, and of the four, thanks to a wise selection of partners, win two. This is only the third time this summer that I have handled a tennis racket. I don't succeed, throughout the afternoon, in getting in even one really good service, but the whole performance is a pleasant blend of perspiration, persistence and persiflage.

Very pleasantly entertained by S. and Lady S., and after dinner several of his people, including Jackson, his Vice-Chairman, come in and we talk about the next day's proceedings. I am warned that I shall be sitting at luncheon next to Robertson, one of the T.U. leaders whom they find very stupid and difficult. He represents the Card Room. They say he has no sense of humour and no courage and is very conceited. I ask whether it would be a good gambit to enquire from him "What do you do in the Card Room? Play cards?) They are horrified at this suggestion and really quite frightened that I mean it seriously. They say it would completely wreck the success of my visit. It would be repeated endlessly and used completely to discredit me in all cotton circles. Mr Robertson himself would be most deeply offended. The only person who really sees the joke is Jackson, who thinks it a very good new line. "Penny nap in the Card Room".

1. 9. 42.

The Exhibition, which I open, of Lancashire's cotton war products is very well laid out and quite impressive. Here I am joined by R., who spends two days running - quite a remarkably long time! - more or less in my company. On the Thursday (3rd) she goes off to Leeds.

B.O.C. seems to be doing good work, though subject to jealous criticism by some merchants.

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The Cotton Board look a solid lot, with the possible exception of the unfortunate Mr Barclay, around whom such violent controversy has raged. I reappoint him to represent the Merchants in spite of much protest by Pardoe and Co. He looks a bit of a rabbit, but anyhow much better than P. or any of those under his control.

At luncheon I find Robertson really quite easy and win his heart by telling back, when called upon to make a short speech afterwards, a rather pointless funny story which he had related to me in the course of lunch, saying that it was he who told it to me. Sir John Grey, an elderly employer, comes out with quite a good speech - a number of them make speeches after lunch - saying that one of the most important things that they must do is to improve physical layout, cleanliness, lighting and general convenience of the mills and other places of work. Otherwise, they will never get any of the younger generation to come into cotton.

Entertained to dinner by the Lord Mayor at the Town Hall, some 30 people being present. Wright-Robinson is a great character, is said to be making a very good Lord Mayor, and certainly made to-night a most suggestive and felicitous speech. Hitherto I have chiefly heard of him as one of the leading Local Authority educational administrators. He was for some years Chairman of the Education Committee of the Manchester City Council. Tawney has often spoken highly of him. He is, when off duty from his local authority tasks, an organiser for the N.U.D.A.W. I heard no-one speak ill of him while I was in Manchester. I could say this of no other leading personality. At his dinner party to-night about half, I think, were members of the Labour Party, - city councillors, Trade Union leaders, etc.

To-day, therefore, I have made 5 speeches, 3 standing up - Cotton Exhibition, after lunch and after dinner - and 2 sitting down - B.O.C. and Cotton Board.

2. 9. 42.

Mill visited is Texas, at Ashton-under-Lyme. My layman's impression is that there are too many different machines and processes and that a lot could be telescoped. I say this, and they don't disagree. More research wanted.

My public meeting is quite a success. The hall is packed, many standing, and some unable to get in. About 1,500 are

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present. I tell them that I come covered with cotton fluff from a Ring and Mule mill.

Quite a useful lunch by Longworth. I make not a bad speech, ending up by saying that if, after having seen me personally and talked with me, anyone in future should tell them that this President of the B.T. is a destructive Bolshevik intent only on destroying private enterprise and ruining our trade, each of them will be able to reply "Don't be a bloody fool." On this I sit down. Sir T. Barlow, who follows, says that his job is to represent the President, up on the sixth floor, as on the one hand a very busy man - heading bores away from him - and on the other as a very bad-tempered man. And so, when Minutes come down in red ink, signed H.D., furiously demanding "Where are those utility towels?", Sir T.B. can get hold of the officials responsible and, in agitated fashion, say to them "We really must get on with this quickly, or there will be another frightful explosion on the sixth floor." And so we all play into each other's hands.

Following the lunch, a further conference at which we discuss monetary and other subtle questions, in which I did not find it difficult to hold my own.

Thence to tea with the Merchants. Carpenter, the well-meaning new Chairman, Fishwick, who gives rather a boring résumé, Wood, the young man from Bradford mentioned above, whom I like, though he speaks from a brief which is a bit critical, and Pardoe, whom I like less than anyone else in Manchester. Sir T.B. is with me and I listen to a lot of silly accusations, especially by P., against B.O.C. - a long-winded story about a contract for lawns to Burma which B.O.C. snatched from him. I say that there is clearly here a conflict of evidence, and I ask Sir T.B. to look into it, adding that I was with B.O.C. yesterday and heard from them quite a different version, namely, that they had never bypassed or interfered with any merchant, except that they had put into ^{the} merchants' hands a large aggregate of orders which, but for B.O.C., would never have come to Manchester at all, but would have gone to Japan or to Brazil.

Next meeting with a group of prominent persons in Manchester and Salford Labour Party circles. They make a lot of obvious grouching points, though several say they think Labour Ministers are doing very good work and not getting enough credit. I finally make a reply which seems to give some satisfaction, as does the fact that I have asked Wallis to collect them, so that it

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shall not be said that a Labour Minister passed through Manchester and did not meet the Labour Party leaders.

Thence with R. to dine with Sir T. and Lady Barlow at Didsbury. This is a very pleasant evening, at which their daughter Theodora and Preston are also present. Sir T.B. produces some very good wine from the Saar and some Napoleon brandy. He also has some very good modern pictures. He is a most human creature and I like him very much. His wife was at Newnham and is a sister of Sir Stephen Gaselee, who would be called anywhere else the Librarian, but at the Foreign Office is described as the Keeper of the Papers.

To-day I have made one long public speech lasting an hour, plus 3 speeches in private conferences, plus odds and ends at the cotton mill, etc.

3. 9. 42.

Weaving mill visited is Ashton Bros. This is a vertical establishment - spinning, weaving, finishing, etc., all within the one firm. Good and up-to-date. Photographers come round with us and I am photographed in various compromising-looking situations, shouting into the ears of ladies amid the noise of the weaving shed, etc. I find them weaving utility towels, on which I compliment them.

Conference with Trade Union leaders goes very comfortably. I listen to their various observations and make a suitable reply. I take particular note of a young man named Thornton, who puts his case very well and sees a lot more points than some of the others. He is from the Rochdale weavers. I should like to do something to push him along, but I suppose all the old frogs would be fierce with jealousy.

Lunch with the C.W.S. Directors, with Sutton in the Chair. They still eat a very heavy lunch and look pretty prosperous. Afterwards I play a game of chess with one of their experts, and after he has made one bad mistake, so that it looks as though I am winning, I make a blunder too, and he gets away with it. But quite an entertaining game, which makes me five minutes late for my appointment with the manufacturers.

This again is quite a friendly performance, and I promise to consider everything that they have said about finance, etc.

/Thence

Except Thornton
MP

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Thence to press conference at 4 p.m., where I make a general statement and answer a number of questions. The report of this in next day's M.G. is nearly as long as of my original speech, and the tone quite friendly.

Then drive with Streat and Preston, preceded as always by a police car, through the Wythenshawe Housing Estate, paying particular attention to the parkway, beautifully planted, which particularly impressed R., and on to the house of Mr Barnes at Styal. This is a large house surrounded by the most admirable trees and abutting on a National Trust possession in the form of some quite lovely woodlands through which runs a stream. A most attractive patch of unspoilt country within only 12 miles of the centre of Manchester.

At dinner with Streat, Platt, Jackson, Walters, and their wives, together with Lady Barlow and Preston, I am deliberately rather indiscreet, so as to keep them amused. Tales about the late Mr Chamberlain, Sir Horace (Munich) Wilson, Vansittart, and some recent events in Moscow and the Middle East. I think they all enjoyed their evening.

When the party is dispersed, I run into Young, now a National Director of Production at the Ministry of Fuel and Power. He is fed to the teeth with all the difficulties, and in particular with the obstructions which he is meeting at H.Q. He hopes that some time next year we may get an improvement in coal output. I could have made good use of this man, but I am not quite sure whether the others are getting the best out of him.

To-day I have made one long public speech to the press, 3 "informal" speeches at private gatherings, and kept the conversation going for some time to-night.

4. 9. 42.

Sleep in until 11.30, when I am visited by two rayon manufacturers who tell their tale quite well and I promise them to consider sympathetically any of their problems. I tell them that if they would only learn to make rayon out of our home-grown straw, as I am told is now within the bounds of possibility, they would become an exceptionally important industry, since they would then be able to export without importing. So long as they depend on imported wood pulp, they are not really much more use, per unit of product, to the trade balance than the cotton industry itself.

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Ask Streat and Platt to lunch, with Preston, to discuss finally the plan of campaign for the Committee of Enquiry. Streat will write to me further about this. I emphasise to them the importance of close and visible co-operation between me and Bevin.

And so to the station, greeted and guarded everywhere by large numbers of police, up to the rank of Inspector, and accompanied by a Detective Sergeant in plain clothes who has hardly left me during all my stay, at any rate while I have been outside the hotel. Greeted with great effusion by the Station Master dressed in a top hat and escorted to my reserved compartment. As a generous gesture I admit four members of the general public to the seats not occupied by Preston or myself. And so sleepily back to London.

To-day I have made nothing that could properly be called a "speech".

DIARY

(inc. agent)

5. 9. 42

Sir S. Low and Lintott to see me on Agents provocateurs, Accountants, and the obstruction of Mr Yandell. I shout at them a bit and decide that Y. shall in future report direct to Watkinson.

Take Watkinson out to lunch and find him very keen and good at his new job. I am quite sure that I have done the right thing in promoting him, in spite of doubts and opposition.

I dine with Robin Brook, who says that "they" are now doing very well in Poland, fulfilling their complete programme and dropping both persons and things according to plan. He sees a good deal of Morton, but always feels slightly embarrassed because the latter was clearly very antagonistic to G.J., for whom he himself worked, I know, with great loyalty and appreciation for a number of months, even though working in a subordinate capacity to G. was not very easy, for lack of cut-and-dried instructions. He says that at the F.O. they all say of G.J. "Very able ... yes, but..." I ask what he thinks "Yes, but..." means. He says he thinks it means that G. always laughs at the wrong place, and laughs alone, and the others don't like it. He gathers that this often happened in the Council at B. Street. And behind it, one must admit, he says, that there is "a certain arrogance". He thinks that this will mean that, at a certain point G.'s career will be side-tracked. I say that I had jeered at G. sometimes for what I called his gullibility, and his mistaken belief that he was generally popular. R.B. said that this "gullibility" was really because G. was so keen on his job that he didn't realise that other people don't base their judgments solely on the merits of work-issues, but introduce many more personal considerations.

6. 9. 42. (Sunday)

Take Rettinger to lunch and arrange with him that I can accept the invitation of the Polish Squadron to go to Exeter next Thursday, since air transport both ways will be provided. We then talk of other things, and he gives an account of a talk Sikorski and he had alone at Chequers with the P.M. last weekend. The P.M. said quite frankly that, in his recent talks with Stalin, he did not mention Poland. He did not feel that he could do anything for them on this occasion, since he had so much to answer regarding our own reverses and our slowness over the Second Front. But he had

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assured Sikorski that, "At the Peace Conference I shall be able to help you a great deal". R. said that both the P.M. and Eden, and Roosevelt and Stalin, had now given the Poles private assurances that they should have East Prussia and Danzig, and they counted also on themselves and the Czechs getting Silesia. The P.M., he said, had spoken very violently about the "vingt-cinque canailles" who had voted against him on the last Confidence motion in the House. R. also said that talks were still proceeding between British and German bankers at Basle under the auspices of the B.I.S., and that he could get me particulars of what went on. I said that I should be most grateful.

7. 9. 42

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 All Ministers of Cabinet rank are invited to lunch at the Admiralty, and the P.M. makes one of his very attractive intimate and amusing speeches to his "pals and comrades". He recalls our first gathering just before Dunkirk, and how then all seemed very black and we were all prepared to give up everything, including life itself as one of the least things to give up, rather than give in, and how we, by our united determination to go on to the end, sustained him in those days. And now, in spite of all, the prospect is measurably brighter. He gave an account, much on the lines that I had heard before, of his visit to the Middle East and Moscow. He said very frankly that Auchinleck had become a very dangerous failure and that the spirit of the troops was not at all good, though he hoped that now it had been improved.

Of Stalin he said many complimentary things. Also "He is very genial out of business hours" and this he had appreciated. He thought that they had got on very well together. The last night, he being due to catch a plane away at 5 a.m. next morning, Stalin asked him, when they had finished their formal business about 7 p.m., whether he had any preoccupation that evening. When he said no, Stalin said "Then let us go and have some drinks together". (In Russia, the P.M. explained, they never say "Come and have a drink", but always "Come and have some drinks".) They then repaired to the Kremlin, to Stalin's private apartments, which were conveniently, but by no means luxuriously, furnished. Stalin then proceeded himself to draw the corks from a large number of bottles, in the midst of which process a pretty red-haired girl entered. She kissed Stalin, who looked to see how W.C. reacted to this. "And I confess", said the P.M., "that I acquired a quite definite physical impression". It was Stalin's daughter. Stalin

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then asked, "Do you mind if we have Molotov as well?", and added, "There is one thing you can say in defence of Molotov: he can drink." So Molotov was allowed in too. Then they had drinks and food and drinks and talk till 3 a.m., and then the P.M. said that he must go to pack up, as his plane left at 5. The P.M. is quite convinced that the Russians will fight on and on until victory "Even if we and the Americans were to throw in our hands to-morrow, I am sure that they would go on."

This afternoon Leith-Ross comes to report on his return from the U.S.A. The Americans will do nothing till after the elections in November, for fear of something getting out. Reverting to other arrangements, L.R. says that, just after I left M.E.W., A.E. was "quite savage" against G.J. because the latter put up such resistance to the suggestion of a Treasury enquiry into our organisation. This reminded me of the attribution to Selborne of the "conditioned reflex: G.J. - rows with the F.O."

Watkinson is doing very well and comes to see me every day to report progress. There will soon, I think, be something on Retail Trade, on which H.G. is being most active.

8. 9. 42

11 a.m. Question Time in the Monkey House. I go down prepared for a real row over check traders, and give a deliberately flat-footed answer, following it up with a carefully prepared informative supplementary answer on alternative methods of giving credit. Very much to my surprise, there is much applause in support of my answer, both original and supplementary, largely from the Labour Benches, but also to a considerable extent from the Conservatives. Certainly more than half the House is on my side. The Check traders, I suppose, have much over-played their hand and caused irritation among many M.P.s, but 150 of these have written to me, a number of them several times, as they have passed back my stock replies to the check traders and received their comments. It has been the most blatant and persistent agitation which I have encountered since coal rationing, and, in some respects, it is still more blatant, being the work of a small group of unashamed defenders of a most shocking ramp. I am working on the arithmetic of the thing, and it seems now that we can safely say that the net effect of poundage, plus discounts from retailers, plus keeping retailers out of their money for six weeks, is to give the check traders a gross profit of some 300% per annum.

/I stay

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I stay on after questions to hear the P.M.'s speech. It is pretty good, on anticipated lines. Even while he is speaking, the House begins to empty, and when he has finished, practically everybody goes out to lunch. The whole debate, indeed, collapsed shortly after, and Cripps - silly ass - instead of saying that this shows that the House is completely satisfied and that the Government has received the equivalent of an almost unanimous vote of confidence, preaches a priggish sermon on the duty of M.P.s to stay and talk. He is rapidly losing all that is left of his "Mystique".

I am caught by Kirkwood and persuaded to see some check traders whom his friend Hugh Frazer - who does not impress me more favourably on closer acquaintance - has in tow. They come up to my room, two Waddiloves, Morton, their Solicitor, and Frazer, and I spend two hours with them, good humouredly arguing backwards and forwards over their blessed poundage. I say that I make no commitment to them except that I will consider what they have said. I shall, of course, not swerve at all. It is a most curious thing that the check traders get no mention at all in the daily press. My questions and answers on this are quite unreported next day, though a number of my other questions, much less exciting departmentally, are put in. Mr Victor Waddilove, who looks a most frightful scoundrel, thinks he has made some impression on me, and, as he leaves, begs me to come and stay with him next time I am in Bradford. It would be much more comfortable, he says, than staying in a hotel!

9. 9. 42

Attend Memorial Service in the Abbey to the Duke of Kent. The damn thing has no character at all. Smooth unctuosities by actor-priests, and beautiful music; but it might just as well have been for any notability. I recall having made the same comment on a similar service I attended when some Australian Ministers crashed in an aeroplane at Canberra. I said then "No smell of the Bush in the Abbey this morning."

Lunch at the House, where members of all Parties are still buzzing furiously over check traders. I regard my answer yesterday, and its favourable reception, as having settled the thing. But many are still fidgeting, though some, including Denville, are on my side.

Beale and Business Members come in this afternoon and discuss with me, H.J. and various officials, Beale's project for

/Dillon

H) *Pinkerton*

better organised and more fully recognised Trade Associations. I appoint a committee, with H.J. as Chairman, of 4 Business Members and 4 officials, to study the question.

Pinkerton to see me and ask for another date for a public meeting. I tell him that great numbers of people, including particularly leading members of the Labour Party locally, just don't know what risks we are running, nor what the war means. He responds quickly to this by saying that he has got a team of international speakers - allied and not enemy foreigners - to go about the country telling what is happening in their own lands. I say that on this condition, and particularly if he will get Szapiro, who is a member of his team, to speak with me, I will do a meeting for him in November at Nottingham.

I get G.J. to come round for a moment before dinner to find out where my Reparations paper has got to in the F.O. It appears to have got nowhere, though I sent it off with a suitable letter to A.E. on the 29th August. G.J. has not yet seen it, though it should, as a matter of routine, have been at once referred to him. He will find out what has gone wrong. I tell him that K.W. had said to me, with a slight chuckle, "My instincts are all with you, but I will have to discuss it with my officials. Anthony won't like it a bit." G. added that he had congratulated Liesching the other day, and the latter, rather horrified, had asked "How do you know?" Leith-Ross, just returned from the U.S.A., was not so complimentary about L. as everybody else had been. He thought that I might find him rather "pettifogging" and added that he was rather like, both in appearance and manner, what Overton had been at his age.

10. 9. 42.

Rather a comic day. Leave Millbank at 9.15 to pick up Victor Cazalet, now a Colonel, at the Dorchester and take him to Hendon aerodrome, where it has been arranged, I was assured last night, both by the Air Ministry and the Poles, that an American aeroplane would fly us down to Exeter. It would only take three quarters of an hour, they said, and so, leaving at 10.15, we should arrive in good time for all the festivities, apart from Mass, our presence at which, it was thought, might embarrass us. I don't quite know why. Anyhow, three Polish Ministers and Sikorski's daughter were flying down earlier in another plane, and Sikorski himself was flying down in a Beau Fighter.

/Arrived

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Arrived at Hendon just before 10, V.C. and I find that no-one knows anything about any plane, American or other, to take us or anyone else anywhere. The American Flight, in particular, know nothing at all about it. The officer on the telephone, not having clearly caught our names, keeps on telling everybody on the phone, in our presence, that "A very important person and a Colonel" are in his office waiting to be flown. After hearing a few of these messages, I get him to understand that I am the President of the Board of Trade. So then he says "President of the Board of Trade and Colonel" are in his office.

After about half an hour of this inconclusiveness, Sir Louis Gregg appears, very affairé, accompanied by his son, aged 17, just entering on his last year at Eton, after which he is to join the Scots Guards - rather an ineffective youth, I thought, - Air Marshal Bottomley, and little Roberts from the F.O., sent, perhaps, to keep a watchful eye, on the Foreign Secretary's behalf, on me when let loose among my Poles.

Gregg having hustled about for some time, announces that an American Liberator is coming in to pick us up. But this horrifies the Station Commander, who declares that a Liberator needs more than double the length, wherein to land, which is available here. Then more telephoning. Then we are told that General Candy - a slightly comic name, I thought, even at first hearing - would be arriving himself in another American plane with a number of American officers, and we should all fly down together. At 11.20 the American plane arrived, and General Candy emerged, walking very briskly, as in American films, followed by a considerable staff and body of mechanics. All very agreeable. It took 20 minutes to fill this plane up with oil, and then we started, at 11.40. She was a large plane, though smaller than a Liberator. I think some sort of Douglas. She was quite stripped inside and we had to sit on ledges. She was also rather noisy, so that most of the conversation was loud shouting and a good deal of writing things down on paper in answer to simple questions posed by inquisitive Americans. Master Gregg was air sick quite a lot, constantly withdrawing to the rear of the plane. Cazalet looked a little solemnly green, but the rest of us came through very well. We flew quite fast, escorted, soon after the start, by three Spitfires flown by Polish pilots who kept close beside our wing tips, their cockpits open to the sky and visibility quite good, though we had to fly rather low - not much, I should think, above 800 feet. When we had been in the air for an hour and a half, flying at a good pace all the time, it became quite clear that we had missed our way. Gregg

/became

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became very much concerned, and went up to converse with General Candy, who had remained glued to the controls. "We must have overshot the mark", said Gregg, returning from this talk, "We shall have to come down at the first opportunity to find out where we are." Soon after this, we started to descend upon an aerodrome surrounded by newly erected barracks. But they put the balloons up, a signal that we should not be welcome, presumably because we were too big to land in their narrow field. So we flew on again, but a little later spotted another airfield and were permitted to come down on it. We made a very perfect landing and were soon surrounded by a group of surprised-looking sailors. This was a Coastal Command Station, though inland, at Yeovil. It was twenty to two. We had been in the air for two hours. But, since Yeovil is not far out of the direct line from London to Exeter, it would appear that General Candy must have taken us up into mid-Wales and back, or some such divagation. We were then warned by a bearded naval officer that the visibility on approaching Exeter was very poor and that it would be very difficult to land this large plane safely there, particularly as, it now appeared - and this was the most surprising thing of all - General Candy had got no wireless apparatus on his plane and had thus been quite unable to speak either to the ground or to the supporting Spitfires, which latter, had they only known the truth, could have led us easily to Exeter, their own home station. They must, indeed, have wondered why the General was exploring such a lot. The General said that he had been "following the railroad", but whatever may be the case in the Purple Desert of Arizona, this is not quite such a good plan in this little island, where he had obviously picked up quite the wrong railroad and followed it much too far. Air Marshal Bottomley at once decided that, for reasons of safety, we must "accept the advice which is given to us" and not try to fly off to Exeter. On the other hand, he offered to assist General Candy in navigating the plane back forthwith to London. The General, quite unperturbed and still walking briskly (as in the films) said he would be very glad to fall in with this arrangement, and he and I wished one another a hearty good day and I expressed the hope that we should soon meet again. I was then packed, most uncomfortably, with V.C. and Roberts into a very small car driven by a rather ugly female driver, and we thus proceeded to Exeter, where we arrived at 3 p.m. Everything was over, the Investiture by Sikorski, the March Past, the Fly Past, the Lunch, at which Sikorski had made an important speech. And now we joined a miscellaneous party, in which, however, Polish airmen predominated, at a country house being used by the officers of the Polish Squadron as their Mess. We got a few drinks and a few sandwiches, and then I made a speech -

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a very good and hardly at all prepared speech - to the Polish airmen, with a few bits of Polish in it, beginning and ending with "Czokiem Lotniczy Polsi" ("Greetings, Polish fliers"). In the course of my speech I grasped Sikorski by the hand and paid him some high compliments. Then he spoke, and did the same to me, and then the Polish N.C.O.s, beaming with pleasure, advanced upon us and threw first me and then him three times into the air. It was very nicely done, and I then said to the General that this sort of thing was very good for the stomach. We then had some more drinks, I signed some autographs, and we returned quite uneventfully, V.C., Roberts and I flying back in the same plane with the three Polish Ministers who had come down earlier.

I am once more, as always, impressed with the high morale, high spirit, and wonderful versatility of the Poles. Though I had not time to stay for it, I admired a trestle table loaded with a great variety of savoury dishes of all kinds, made, so they assured me, wholly from their rations. There was also a Polish military band which played in the background.

They are said to be getting on not less well with the Devonshire girls than up in Scotland. Quite a number of legal marriages have been consummated. I told them, in my speech to-day, that in Scotland I heard a war memorial had been erected "To the daughters of Scotland who fell for the Poles". Some of these Poles intend, I think, to stay in England after the war, if they survive, and to settle down here with their English or Scottish wives. Other wives will, no doubt, go back to the free and happy Poland of to-morrow along with their husbands. Both ways it will be good. Sikorski told us that he was always getting letters from English or Scots girls who had become entangled with his Poles. One Scots girl had written to him the other day: "Dear General Sikorski, I am writing to tell you that I have lost my virginity with one of your soldiers and now we want to get married. But he says that his Commanding Officer won't give him any leave, to be with me. Will you please say that he is to have 48 hours leave like our own soldiers get?" Sikorski said that he had replied that he had given special orders that this Pole was to have, not 48 hours, but 7 days leave to spend with his new wife.

I tell the Poles in my speech this afternoon that they had set the first example which all the rest of the United Nations had followed. They had been the first to stand up and resist Hitler with arms in their hands. All the rest of us, I said, British and Russians and Americans, had only followed the lead

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which Poland gave. This was, I thought, a good new and unpremeditated way of putting it.

On the way to Hendon this morning V.C. poured forth again his old tale of woe about the higher direction of the war, very anti-P.M. and anti-Pound. The higher direction, he says, is "very messy", the same subjects being successively discussed by the Chiefs of Staff Committee, the Defence Committee, and the War Cabinet. He thinks the War Cabinet should take complete charge of the war. I am not much impressed by this, and say so, but there is more weight, I think, in his criticisms of the Admiralty. Pound has certainly gone on too long, but the P.M. likes him and A.V.A. now makes no attempt to "interfere" in appointments, leaving all these to be settled by Pound, who has recently been putting a number of his personal friends into key posts - Portsmouth Command, Orkneys and Shetlands, etc. A.V.A., V.C. says, is quite content to be a cipher and to leave the running of the Navy to the P.M. and Pound, retaining his honourable status and exercising no real influence. I say that I am sure that Pound should be replaced by someone younger; that it is a good rule to change men in high command every few years, in view of the immense strain upon them. I daresay all he says about A.V.A. is quite true. He also hears that the feeling among high-ups at the Admiralty is not at all good, that Pound is very unapproachable and has, too obviously, his own pets. We both agree that Sir J. Grigg is a great failure at the W.O., not having, as V.C. says, any idea of how to deal with human beings. He is a most unimpressive Minister in the House, and much less good with the Generals than Margesson was. V.C. also relates that Mountbatten, though a great pet of the P.M., is still being completely held up by the three Services, the Heads of all of which are very jealous of him. In the Dieppe Raid there was only a handful of the personnel of Combined Operations, and the W.O. in particular are very vexed at the continuation of the Commandoes under a separate head. V.C. goes on to say that, bad as we are, the Americans are, in every respect, much worse. This, in view of our experience later in the day with General Candy, may well be true! V.C. should always be taken with very large doses of salt, and he has nothing really "constructive" to propose, least of all an alternative P.M. He tells me that in 1923/4, on his first election to Parliament, he became P.P.S. to Swinton, who was then President of the Board of Trade. He had also been invited by Austin Chamberlain to be his P.P.S. at the F.O., but Swinton had "fixed it with Austin on the telephone" - much to V.C.'s dismay, and Austin, therefore, had to fall back on Eden as second choice. It was clear - this conversation taking

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place in front of little Roberts, who no doubt reported it at the F.O., - that V.C. thought that if he had only gone to Austen in 1924, he might have been Foreign Secretary now, instead of Eden. He said "My Party has never done anything for me." I said "Perhaps you have joined the wrong Party."

11. 9. 42.

C.W. takes P.Q.s to-day (Friday). I hear that the House is thin. A stray question on check traders is not asked. A question on agents provocateurs gives us a good pre-arranged score, for Lipson puts a supplementary which enables C.W. to say that Nicolson has admitted that his tale in the Spectator was a romance in which he did not himself believe. This is said to have been received quite well by a thin House, and we must now follow it up and rub H.N.'s nose in the mud.

With Robin Brook to W.L. - his wife being up in Scotland for some weeks.

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11 - 14. 9. 42.

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With Robin Brook at W.L., a very satisfactory visitor, who appreciates both the house, the surrounding country, and many things in the garden. Indeed, he so admires *Pyrus Sargentii* and *Berberis Thumbergii* ~~Atropapura~~ that I undertake to order for him a specimen of each from Hillier. We walk quickly, running only about 100 yards, to and from Marlborough, and he joins in various simple tasks in the garden. He is not so good as one so intelligent should be at chess, but he writes a very well-turned Roofer.

We talk a good deal about Operations, he being still Gubbins' No.2 on "Policy". He thinks it clear, from the evidence of the last three years, that a number of nations have become too sophisticated to be really good at war. In this list, along with French and Italians, must be included large sections of the British and, very surprisingly, of the Australians. On the other hand, Russians, Germans, Poles, Japs, and - a great contrast with the Australians - New Zealanders are still very brave. The first class are inclined to surrender rather than fight, unless they have everything that a soldier can desire - air cover overhead, tanks, guns, supplies - including plenty of food and water - and generally "a superiority of everything". So it was in Singapore and, apparently, from time to time in the Western Desert.

Our sailors and airmen are, I think, as good as any of the still "martial races", but the same cannot be said of the great lump of residue now in our Army. Nor should we assume that even the "martial races" are good right through. I expect there will be a great lump of weakness ultimately in the German Army. But Christopher Mayhew, writing to me on Durbin's book, says "We are not so brave as we were at Agincourt and Marston Moor", and I daresay this is true. The moral is that this is an additional reason for avoiding war in the future, namely that we are less good at it than some other people, many of whom on all other points are less desirable human beings than the best of us are.

R.B. says that their information is that German casualties "out of the war", i.e., dead, severely wounded and prisoners, are now four millions, whereas the corresponding British figure is less than 400,000, and the Russian about six millions, including a vast figure of prisoners. (The figures for Germany and Russia are both

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thought to be much too high by others to whom I mention them.)

R.B. has a great contempt for Sir R. Campbell, our Ambassador at Lisbon. He says that most people think that Campbell ran away from his post in France in June, 1940. He should not have left Bordeaux so hurriedly. His last despatch, in which he presents himself as always muscling in with Reynaud and "insisting" on being received, is a rather self-conscious apologia. The F.O. are always very bad in the way in which they stick to one another and cover up each other's shortcomings. "Mr Eden is a reprehensible character", he says, partly because he treats all questions in a very personal way, as affecting his own personal dignity and prestige, and also because he falls in with this F.O. plan for general whitewashing. R.B. thinks that in the case of Campbell "making a clean breast" to Salazar over S.O. - which was quite contrary to his instructions from the F.O. - even the latter would have rebuked him pretty severely had not G.J. hotted up the F.O. too much over this gaffe. If G. had been quieter, Campbell might even have come unstuck. I tell R.B. what Leithers said to me about A.C., G.J. and the Enquiry. R.B. says this is difficult to understand, because G.J. proposed Leithers to the F.O. as a suitable person to hold the enquiry.

14. 9. 42

Back from W.I. with Robin Brook. Talk in the train with Keeling, Tory M.P. for Twickenham, who has with him his wife, much younger than himself and in W.A.A.F.'s uniform, with very red nose and a bit too eager (to enter into the men's discussion). We get on to the old topic of check traders, and a little Naval officer - the Naval equivalent of a Quartermaster: I forget what they call that - and his wife, who says that she is very active with the W.V.S., join in. Both of these last two know all about check trading and denounce it hotly. The man says that it is a most frightful ramp, and his wife says that sailors' wives have come to her in despair, having been unable to keep up their weekly payments and having to be fitted out with clothes, free of charge, by the W.V.S., and both say that many sailors' homes have been broken up by check traders, the husband returning to find that his wife has mortgaged the entire income of the home to the tallyman. Keeling says that he has learned a good deal from this conversation. The education of M.P.s is very slow.

15. 9. 42.

Retail Trade Conference. Some progress reported. Watkinson is very keen on developing pooled buying by small men. Details to be worked out and consultations with the trade.

Liesching to lunch. He is a good buy. A bit of a Tory no doubt, and a little solemn, solid and conventional. But good brains and a good Whitehall reputation and very pleased at the substantial promotion in the Whitehall hierarchy which I have got for him. (I hear from Noel Hall some days later that he was getting rather "waspish" because he felt that he was being kept down and not given enough opportunity.) He will start in with me as soon as C.R.A. gets back from Newfoundland with Clutterbuck, who will succeed him at the D.O. I tell him that I don't want long Minutes written, and he says that this is not his way.

Meet Edgcumbe, who is a good deal less good than his paper on Reparations, which I praised the other day. Rather an acid, in-growing, disappointed, unco-operative chap. He says that he was at Cambridge with me. He used to sit, he says, in the second row behind me at the Union. (I hear afterwards from A.O. that he was tried in the B. of T. but found to be quite incapable of either devolving detail or working in a team.)

Dine with J.W. and Francis Cooke. The latter has a very good opinion of Francis Cooke, and I don't think I should want to see him very often - he talks frightful rubbish about not being able to research at Cambridge because the libraries all closed at 4 o'clock and the Dons were all so jealous of him that they wouldn't give him any real help in his research, lest he should steal their original thoughts and publish them himself. But he is in a position to know something about malpractices in the City and will, no doubt, be quite useful in that sphere.

16. 9. 42.

Scottish retailers, months too late, tell me they are against the Third Report of the Retail Trade Committee. But they would like something done to cure mal-distribution, and also the Wartime Liabilities Adjustment Act to be extended to Scotland. (For some queer reason, Tom Johnstone is against this.)

See "The First of the Few" at the Rialto, a party arranged by Major Williams Thompson, who is paying attention to me just now. But I rather like him. He brings along Lady Colefax

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and a middle-aged, gushing, and hardly good looking lady with a foreign accent, whose name I miss, who appears to be employed at the Ministry of Food.

17. 9. 42

Conference with Hodgson, Low, Marker and J.W. on (1) Bernales and (2) the reform of Company Law with special reference to nominee shareholders. H. has become quite dashing, partly as a result of prods by me and J.W., and partly, perhaps, because he may have heard that I was contemplating retiring him if this was necessary to get the Treasury agreement to Liesching and Watkinson. He will make a short note on ways of dealing with nominees, and a larger note, a little later, on the most drastic reform of Company Law which modern conditions demand. "A slight change in direction", he says. I suppose that Runciman, Duncan, etc., never encouraged him to contemplate any reforms at all in this field.

Press Conference to put over the new "Industrial Ten" clothing coupons. It goes over better than I expected, and no-one asks whether any class of workers is to receive more. So anyhow we gain time.

Say good-bye and thank you to Wills, who is now 65 and is retiring, as a result of persistent prodding by me on A.O., and being succeeded by Nowell, as Head of C.R.T. (under Liesching). This poor old chap has been no match for Treasury and F.O. officials and has been a Whitehall by-word for years. But he is peeved to be going, and not very responsive to my routine compliments. He says that he is still very fit and would like, after a month's rest, to do something useful. He has a high opinion of his own qualifications and experience. They say that he is a first-class churchwarden.

Streat to dine with me at the Lansdowne. A.O. has a heavy cold so can't come. I tell him next day that it is rather early in the autumn to give way like this. Barlow, Watkinson, Preston and MacMahon make up the party. They seem to like it and show no signs of separating till 12.30, when I make the first move. Most of the time discussing cotton, terms of reference of Enquiry, possible Chairman, etc. Streat thinks that H.J. Wilson would be ideal. He has a weakness for this Municheer. I say it is politically quite impossible. We end up with political reminiscences

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by me. Streat has seen Leggett at the M. of L. and says that he too is in favour of great caution with cotton.

18. 9. 42 - 21. 9. 42

At W.L., alone this weekend. The weather is pretty bad and I spend most of the time reading Carr's two books "Twenty Years of Crisis" and "Conditions of Peace". He is an able fellow and has read a lot. He has been much influenced by Marx and has some quite advanced and satisfying views on domestic policy. But he is pretty perverse in International Affairs. He was a failure as a Foreign Office clerk and had to take up the profession of Professor instead, at Aberystwith. He hates "Utopia", the League of Nations, and Poland. On the other hand, he condones the Germans. He is said to be a great influence on the "Times", and I must see him soon. He will like me to make conversation about his books. All authors do!

21. 9. 42

Back from W.L. Noel Hall to see me and to tell the tale of his successes in Washington, both with Americans and with Halifax. He says that immediately after Pearl Harbour, Kingsley Wood sent a telegram suggesting that we could now get better terms out of the Americans. N.H. says that he told Lord H. that, if this were attempted, he would resign, and that Lord H. authorised him to draft "a strong reply", after which no more was heard of this proposal.

Platt to dine with me. Further discussion on the Cotton Enquiry. He is by nature in favour of frontal attack, with wide terms of reference. He is seeing E.B. on Thursday.

My Aunt Mary, wife of my Uncle Llewelyn, has died. I had not seen her for many years, but I am urged to write him a letter. He is very old now and will be very lonely. I write, having very happy memories of her kindness in days long past, that "Now she has found Peace, she is beyond all Pain and Sorrow, leaving behind her a Golden Sunset of Remembrance, lighting up the beauty of the autumn tints of her Pencerrig." This is a good time of year for one who loves gardens to die.

22. 9. 42

Conference on Retail Trade, at which some progress is reported. But Watkinson and H.G. have some ticklish conferences with the trade interests this week, on which much may turn. Unless we can square at least some of these, it may be very difficult to make real progress, and a sticky political situation may develop. (On the other hand, we may, perhaps, be exaggerating the amount of trouble which the Tory pro-small-shopkeepers may be able to raise, if we have shown willingness to do something and the silly idiots have refused to play with us.)

I spend a good deal of to-day with Max Milder, an American film magnate. I lunch with him by arrangement with Finney, now attached to M.M., having left L.G. when it seemed clear that the latter was petering out. The old man, he says, is now nervous of speaking in Parliament. He lives all alone down at Churt and has no real councillor or stimulus. I go this evening with J.W. and Watkinson, now in charge of Films, to a private show of a new American film, sponsored by M.M., on the life of George M. Cohan. Rather too long, but in parts very amusing and working up to a most moving climax. We then go and dine with him and listen to a stream of stories from old Riverdale, who is now very active on behalf of the British Council. "Yankee Doodle Dandy" ↗

This afternoon inspect Utility Furniture at the Imperial Institute. Not bad, but a little too uniform. I am pretty sure that the right policy is to say that these designs are being put into mass production at once, but that I am keeping in being a Committee to advise me on design, and that any furniture manufacturer who survives concentration - which Forres will put through, reducing some 1,250 firms down to about 150 - will be allowed to submit designs, subject to certain pretty rigid specifications, and that these designs, if approved, may also be put into production. Thus, I think, we shall be able to strike a mean between undue "regimentation" and undue variety.

See E.B. on Cotton Enquiry and Retail Trade. On the former, he thinks an enquiry limited to recruitment of youth will be no good. He is very much disappointed with the results of this on coal. Very anti-miner, as often before. He says that they, alone among the workers, are not producing the goods. He has some figures of the comparative ages of munition workers, builders, agriculturalists and miners. There is very little difference. My statement to Parliament that more than 40% of miners are now over 40, and more than 20% over 50, is true, but much the same is true of the other groups as well. The miners have been given everything,

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including an unnecessarily large increase in wages, but the output still goes down. He is, therefore, inclined to favour a much wider enquiry for cotton, which will compel all parties to face the facts. But we don't find it easy to think of a suitable Chairman. He will ponder over this. He would obviously like to play the leading role in this affair, and thinks that perhaps he should begin by sending for all the Trade Union leaders and giving them a damned good talking to. Otherwise, he says, "the cotton industry will commit suicide". I say that it will also commit murder, since we shall be most dependent on cotton for post-war exports. On Retail Trade I say that there has been much delay in discussions between my officials and his, and I get him to urge them to settle the matter quickly.

23. 9. 42

N.E.C. all the morning. Org.Sub. recommends that Laski - "little liar Laski", as someone called him the other day - should be severely censured for writing an article in Reynolds referring to the "paralysis" of the Labour members of the War Cabinet, etc. Watson, using this as a means of attacking Shinbad, who, he says, is even worse, moves that we should have special N.E.C. in a fortnight's or three weeks' time devoted solely to the question of Party discipline. He would like to expel both Laski and Shinbad. After some exchanges of amenities, it is agreed to hold this meeting, and that Attlee and Bevin should be asked to attend.

Portal, with the deplorable de Norman, comes to discuss with C.W. and me the question of requisitioning shops. I think we shall get a modus vivendi. de N. and Warter are to confer.

Dine with Sir A.Mackenzie Livingstone, who is entertaining a party of American soldiers and airmen, including General Dolittle, who bombed Tokio - a squirrel-faced, humourous looking little man. Our host announces that he gave me the choice of meeting King Haakon next week or the American Army this week, and that I plumped for the latter. General Pile is also of the party. He is certainly, as I used to think years ago before I had met many Generals, quite one of the most intelligent of his kind. He says that the defence is once more rapidly overhauling the attack in air warfare. The curve of our losses in night raids over Germany is mounting sharply. This is due, not so much to their flak, as to improved methods of using night Fighters, which just fly up a searchlight beam which has already fastened on an attacking bomber.

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Therefore, he says, we may either win the war before Christmas by increasingly heavy air attacks, before their defence has been still further perfected, or experience such heavy air losses next year that it will be necessary to seek some quite new line of attack, the perfecting of which may take anything up to two years. He says that, on the one hand, our recent air attacks have been exceedingly effective, but that, on the other, "Harris may be too late, since our night bombers, including the newest and most perfect, are not sufficiently heavily armed to be able to fight off enemy Fighters. On the other hand, the American Fortresses, flying by day, will be able to go on through the next phase, when we may be fading out, for these are most heavily armoured and armed and can most effectively defend themselves by day. General Cram, an American who is sitting between us, tells of the great success of the Fortresses against Jap Zero Fighters in the Pacific. One Fortress was recently assailed by six Zeros, of which it shot down five and frightened away the sixth. Our heavy bombers are made for speed and load, not for defence. The Fortresses carry a much lighter load but are armed with 12 guns which between them can fire in any direction. Pile thinks that, if German morale cracks in the next few months, as it may, the Russians will simply advance against no resistance from the East, and we shall be able to make a landing, without much resistance, in the West. But he wonders where we shall then meet. He would like it to be in Berlin, but he thinks that it may be on the Rhine. All this may be a bit fanciful, but I set it down now to check up on later.

DIARY24. 9. 42

Pulbrook, Chairman of Lloyds, to see me. He is going out to the U.S.A. to argue the case for Lloyds against the Americans, who want to collar all marine insurance, "for the duration of the war" - which, no doubt, will mean for ever - on grounds of "security". Mr P. is slightly starchy, and tries to explain that, of the considerable income derived by our insurance Companies from abroad, only a small part is profits. I tell him to keep me informed and that, if things are very difficult on the other side, I will take it to the War Cabinet.

L.P. Policy Cttee. on Youth. It is agreed that we should try to get (1) a short and simple statement, as far as possible in words of one syllable (i.e., not in Laski-ese), of what we want for the young when the war has been won; (2) information to our Labour Groups on Local Authorities of what can be done to stimulate communal and other amenities now for the benefit of the young; (3) better opportunities, which Harold Clay will help to furnish as a member of the relevant Committee, for suitable Labour and Trade Union leaders to address the troops. This is an easy way in, where one has one's audience ready made by order.

Shinbad rang me up, in a most amiable tone of voice, to enquire whether I had had a letter from Swan about Durham Miners' M.P.s retiring at 65. I said I had. He asked whether I had yet replied. I said I had. This disappointed him, as he was clearly anxious to concert a reply. I said that I was wholly in favour of the principle, and that I had proposed this very scheme in a book published in 1934 (on p.41). I said that I had added, in my reply to Swan, that I had only just turned 55 and that the answer to the question, whether I intended to contest the Bishop Auckland Division at the next election, was yes. I asked him how old he was. He said 57. Then, said I, you will have 8 years to run before you reach the age in question. He admitted that this was so, but added that the whole thing was a manoeuvre "to get us all out", and that he had sent the letter to his D.L.P. and would insist on it being discussed. He said that the claim of the D.M.A. that they made a financial contribution to each of our constituencies was all nonsense. The contribution which they made was very small, and they received a much larger contribution to their funds from the miners' Lodges in his, and no doubt in other, constituencies. He did not think that age was the principal question in determining whether an M.P. should retire, though he appreciated that I might feel somewhat bound by having expressed an opinion on the subject some years ago. I said

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that I did not think that either he or I need fear any immediate consequences from this move of the D.M.A., but that I was firmly in favour of a fixed retiring age for M.P.s and a younger Parliamentary Labour Party.

Lunch with Sikorski, Retinger and Bevin. Stanczyk and Kwapinski are expected, but don't turn up. Nothing very fresh, but E.B. again propounds his notion that Petsamo should be an international ice-free port, with railways diverging to Sweden south-westward, to Finland southward, and to Soviet Russia south-eastward.

Conference with Attorney General, Director of Public Prosecutions, Hodgson, Low, etc., on the Bernales case. They seem now half inclined to prosecute, but by God they are slow! It is agreed, however, that I shall now be able to answer Parliamentary questions by saying that I have sent the papers to the D.P.P.

Thorpe to see me. Frost has sent me in a letter of resignation. I ask Thorpe what about it? He says he has only seen F. three times since he took over, and twice he had to go to his room. I say that this is quite against the protocol; F. should have come to his room. He says he did not want to stand too much on ceremony. F. has been doing all sorts of things of which he knows nothing, and holding interviews with traders of which no notes have been kept. F. also said to him that, in the old days, Evershed and F. used to keep a sharp look out on the Board of Trade, whereas Thorpe seems to have been co-operating too closely with Overton and the officials. I say that I think it would be a good thing for F. to go. Thorpe says he thinks so too. I ask Thorpe whether he will need someone else to act, in effect, as Vice-Chairman, but he says he thinks not. Colt and Hoskins are, he thinks, quite able to handle the work. But he would like, and he hopes I will not think this snobbish, to add someone to the Committee who would raise its tone a bit. I say that I have it in mind to get some good retired soldier. He asks whether I have any objection to a sailor. I say no, provided he is suitable. I ask Thorpe to try to find some good retired Admiral and suggest his name to me. Thorpe ends by saying that he is very grateful to me for offering him the job, and that he is very glad he has taken it.

Lord President's Committee on Retail Trade. An easier passage for my paper than I expected, Cripps in particular being quite pro-small-man. The only point at which they boggle is the provision for post-war re-entry, and on this I agree that the opinion of Jowitt's committee of officials should be sought. J.A. says that he understands ~~that he understands~~ that it is not my

/purpose

purpose to favour the small man as such, but that there are various arguments for doing something to redress the balance between small and large traders, and that it is for this reason that I am making these proposals. I say that this is so. (Meanwhile, H.G. tells me that talks with the trade are not going too ill.)

Platt rings up to say that he has seen E.B. and finds him prepared to take a strong line with the cotton people; he adds, with due caution, that E.B. seems inclined to take on most of the work himself, and - though he does not put it quite so bluntly - to leave me only a secondary role. I say that this is quite all right by me. In so far as it is a question of wages, conditions of labour and the "caste system" in the cotton industry, this is really a job not for me, but for the Minister of Labour. It is also quite a sticky job. Therefore, I am quite glad that E.B. should take the lead in handling it. On wider issues of reorganising the industry, it is, of course, much more my affair.

To one of Lady Colefax's parties, where G.J. tells me that A.E. says that he found my paper on Reparations, etc., "very interesting and stimulating" and sat on it for several days. A number of officials have now written Minutes on it, and G.J. understands that A.E. is likely to write to me shortly, accepting my proposal for a committee of officials to examine this and kindred questions. G.J. asks whether I would view with favour Malkin being Chairman of this committee. My immediate reaction is to say that the F.O. would then be counting twice, but on further consideration I agree to the idea, since otherwise (1) G.J. himself would not be on the committee, since the F.O. would be represented by Malkin and Ronald, whereas if Malkin were in the Chair, they would be represented by Ronald and G.J.; (2) the alternative Chairmen are someone from the Treasury, to which I should object on principle, Sir A.Hurst, whom, after all, I fired from his previous job, Sir W.Jowitt himself, who would probably be ineffectual, or Robbins, who would not be quite up to it. Since I should probably send Liesching, who would only just have taken over here, he too would not quite do for Chairman. G.J. says that the Treasury now say that they have been much misrepresented, that there was nothing deliberate behind their exclusion of all reference to costs of Armies of Occupation, and that, of course, if it is decided to adopt a more severe policy towards Germany, there would be no difficulty in adapting their paper. This, he says, is what Playfair says. I say that I hear that P. wrote the paper. He does not think much of Jowitt's proposal to postpone action till his military, naval and air advisers have propounded "heads of an armistice", particularly since we know that one of these advisers is Van Cutsem, though another of them, Bellairs, we both agree is good. G.J. also praises Carr's book on Conditions of Peace, at least the

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first 200 pages. I say that he knows nothing about politics in this country - he says that it is the fault of central Party machines that younger men are not chosen by local constituency organisations, which is the exact reverse of the truth - and that, although he is pretty sound on home policy, in foreign policy he is likely to become Geoffrey Dawson the Second. I intend, however, to see something of him soon.

P.Nichols is also at this party, and he and I speak quite amicably. This is thought by one of the observers to be both remarkable and amusing.

25. 9. 42

Somervell to see me. He has just come back from the U.S.A. and says that he is quite pleased with the prospect of spending at least half the year out there. I tell him that I have made changes here at the top, partly because I thought A.O. was getting very tired and had too little relief - hence the introduction of Liesching and the promotion of Watkinson - and partly because I felt it was urgent that I should be better, and more highly, represented at Washington. Article VII affected me not less than the Treasury and F.O., but there was no-one out there to butt in. I said that I would give him a letter to Halifax when he went back.

Frost to see me. He says he has resigned partly on personal grounds and partly because there has been a change of policy. He says that he has only seen Thorpe twice - it is clear that these two can't pull together if each makes identical complaints about the other. I ask what has changed in policy, and he repeats that, whereas before at the C.P.R.C. they used to "watch out" for the B. of T., now Thorpe is taking orders from the Board and not raising any questions of policy unless invited. I avoid a long debate, but ask Frost what he will do next. He says he has been asked to go to the Ministry of Food, but will first take a month off. I repeat that I am grateful to him for services rendered in the past, and we leave it at that.

Thence to Lord President's Committee, where a long morning is spent on Fuel and Power. My locus this morning is confined to the sale of electrical and gas appliances, but I listen with some amusement to a long discussion. Gwilym appears attended by Tom Smith, Hyndley and Innes (this is most irregular and un-self-reliant). He is evidently anxious to edge away from rationing, though the output has fallen further than the most pessimistic of the alternative hypotheses of three months ago. The miners and the owners were right when they told me that a flat increase in wage

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rates, unrelated to individual output, would mean less coal, and not more. E.B. produces figures to show, in accordance with his talk with me already noted, that the mines are no worse off, as regards age composition, than munitions, building and other industries. Gwilym is hounded back to the White Paper Annexe, from which he does his utmost to extricate himself. But he is reminded by quotations from speeches of J.A., S.C. and myself in the House that, if rationing is to be adopted, it will be according to the White Paper. He is asked whether he has yet got the coupons printed. He says no, and adds that he is advised that it will take 12 weeks. J.A. raises his eyebrows at this, and it is hinted, pretty broadly, that he should have put this printing job in hand long ago; he must now do it at once. He is reminded that Parliament has been told that it will be the duty of the Minister of Fuel and Power to tell the War Cabinet when the coal situation is so serious that rationing is inevitable. He is asked whether this moment has yet come. He says no, and adds that the figures for gas and electricity consumption show some evidence of the success of the appeal for voluntary economy; at this time of year these figures are generally mounting sharply, but this year they have been mounting much more slowly, and in the last fortnight they have even shown a decrease. On sale of appliances, I say that I am against prohibition, since this would be administratively vexatious, and because, properly used, these appliances make for fuel economy. It is left that Gwilym and I shall discuss the matter without any need to refer back to the L.P.'s Cttee. I have said that we could arrange to reduce manufacture a bit later, and to discourage ostentatious display in the shops.

Lunch alone with Dunbar of the Herald. Deaf old fool! He says, quite truly, that Middleton is no use as Secretary of the L.P. and that we should not have kept him on. He thinks that we should offer £5,000 a year for the job, when all sorts of people would be attracted by it who would not look at it now. He doesn't see the point that no-one could be appointed to, and succeed in, this job who was not already well-known and respected in the Labour Movement. He complains of Citrine's preoccupation with international affairs and of Bevin's megalomania. He also talks platitudes about the importance of international economic arrangements after this war. At the end he comes to the real point, and says that the newspapers really cannot cut down their advertisements any more. To ask them to do so would be an infringement of the freedom of the press! It seems that Kingsley Wood and Bracken, meeting the Newspaper Proprietors the other day, mentioned me as particularly interested in such reductions. I talk about the shipping bottle-neck.

To W.L., where I am joined on -

26. 9. 42

- by R. for a short weekend.

27. 9. 42

A perfect, sunny day, nearly all of which I spend in the garden.

28. 9. 42

Back in the morning. Pottery prices and wages. I am not a wage-fixing Department, and the potters, both sides, ~~must~~ *must* go to the Ministry of Labour.

Craig Henderson, silly old fool, to see me about his Retail Trade Committee. I tell him in confidence that I cannot propose to Parliament his Committee's proposal for a compulsory levy. The opposition would be too strong. I aim at getting him to postpone any meeting of his Committee until I am far enough forward to make an announcement in the House. He agrees to this, and I hope, though I do not say so to him, that I shall be able to write them a letter which will precipitate their collective resignation. They are no damned good!

Amusing discussion at O.L.'s Council on (1) extravagant standards of Service Departments, who won't accept cups without handles - O.L. says that he supposes I shall soon be making other household requisites without handles - or reconditioned under-clothing or battledress, and (2) incredible lack of balance in American output programmes, whereby ship-building labour is to be diverted to producing astronomical quantities of tanks, guns, and small arms ammunition, which will be far more than can be expended in this war and cannot be brought across without the ships.

DIARY29. 9. 42

To my great surprise, I have only four P.Q.s to-day, and none on check trading, though many M.P.s still rush up to me to discuss it.

Howling to see me this afternoon. He says he has never been so courteously treated by any President before me. I expound to him our ideas on minimum parcels and on pooled buying. He thinks that these are very important and courageous, if they can be worked. He was timid of committing himself until his Chairman, Lyle, had been sounded, and I agree that he shall bring the latter to see me on Friday (October 2nd) immediately before a conference with officials. L. was the man who tried to resign from the Retail Trade Committee because Craig Henderson refused, on the threat that all the other members would resign if he agreed, to publish L.'s proposed addendum to the Third Report.

Take Thorpe out to dine with J.W. and H.G. A most successful party. Thorpe is good company, amusing and co-operative. He is also, I think, reasonably intelligent, though it remains to be seen how he will settle down to his job.

30. 9. 42

Labour Party meeting. A most chaotic discussion, with an even more chaotic close, on the composition of the Administrative Committee, now due to be elected for next session. There has been a lot of talk in what are called "rebel circles" - this term is used in self-praise by the occupants of these circles - about the undesirability of Ministers being members of the A.C. On the other hand, there is a very strong and simple argument against laying down any rule of the matter, put at this morning's meeting by George Muff, namely that all members of the Party should be equally free to be nominated or not and to vote for which nominees they choose. No Minister, after all, is on the A.C. except by the votes of his colleagues. If it were decided to exclude all Ministers - and P.P.S.s would find it practically impossible to combine a seat on the Front Opposition Bench and frequent speeches of criticism of the Government, with their role in the Department - there would be a very poor rabble to choose from. This morning George Daggar makes a long, rambling, rancorous speech, from which we infer that, when one

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has subtracted from the A.C. all those who are now members of the Government, all those who have been chucked out of the Government, and all those who are ambitious to enter the Government, there is no-one left except George Daggar. He points out that there is now a majority of 1 on the A.C. for the members of the Government. (This is because there has been much recruitment from the A.C. to the Govt., including recently Tom Smith, Phil Baker and Garro Jones.) Daggar ends up his speech by suggesting that the members of the Govt. should meet among themselves and select 3 of their number to sit on the A.C. Right at the end of the meeting, an alternative proposal is suddenly put up by John Parker that not more than one-third of the A.C. should be Ministers. A vote being taken on this, it is declared carried by 38 to 37, but then Scott Lindsay says that he didn't notice whether anybody on the platform voted. I did, quite visibly, against the proposal, though all others on the platform abstained. So this makes 38 to 38, and Greenwood declares that the motion is not carried. Commotion, protests, etc. A very stupid end to a very stupid discussion. But I feel very doubtful whether it is really worth while for me, or, for that matter, for a number of my other colleagues, to stand again for the A.C. One cannot go very often. When one does go, most of the talk is rubbish and has nothing much to do with one's Departmental affairs. One could always go specially if these affairs were in question.

Conference with officials on clothing for Russia. They think we could and should give them a good deal.

Lunch with A.E. to meet little Peter, King of the Jugs. Also present R.A.B., Sargent, and the King's Equerry, who speaks little English but gives the impression of listening in very intently. Perhaps in order to report the talk elsewhere. The King is a funny little creature, who doesn't want to go back to Cambridge. His stay there has not, it seems, been a success. Nor was his period with the Guards Armoured Brigade a success. A.E. says, beforehand, that we should try "to interest him in something" and to do our best for him, since he is the only possible link after the war between the disparate elements in his Triune Kingdom. The poor little chap gives me the impression of having adenoids, and, though faintly shrewd at times, is rather unimpressive. It seems that we might manoeuvre him into some other armoured formation, since he is clever at taking machines to pieces and putting them together again.

Return with A.E. to F.O. to discuss clothing for Russia, relief, etc. Very friendly. I congratulate him on his Coventry speech. It seems that Maisky is in a mood to make trouble about

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many things, and has not only been complaining about our failure to give more clothes, but also about the plans for relief, which he says have not been properly revealed to him, and also, A.E. tells me, about our recent convoy to Russia. Although we had 75 war-ships protecting it, and got through 27 merchant ships, we lost 8 of the latter out of 35. These were all lost on the first day, in the course of the most concentrated torpedo bombing air attack of the war. When Maisky heard the news, instead of saying how good it was that we had got in 27, he complained about the loss of the 8. "Your sailors could not have been paying proper attention", he said. He seems to have imagined them all playing Crown and Anchor below decks.

I asked A.E. what he thought of my paper on Reparations, etc. He said he liked it very much. I asked whether he agreed with my proposed procedure for a committee of officials. He said yes, provided K.W. agreed. I said he did. A.E. thought that he had already sent me a letter about it.

1. 10. 42

To-day the Check Traders' Order, prohibiting poundage, comes into force. C.W. thinks that it is remarkable how little progress this agitation has made in its last stage. M.P.s now, he says, are saying to him "What about these damned check traders?" Last week they were saying "What about this question of check trading?"

Large luncheon party at Chilean Embassy "to meet the Prime Minister". The latter is in very good form, and a document is produced, signed by him and Augustin Edwards, then Chilean Minister here, buying up all Chilean nitrate. P.M. is very friendly and says to me afterwards "Come and see me sometime". I have not talked to him about B. of T. matters for some while. I think that, if he were in the mood, with his mind not too glued to operational matters, there are a number of things happening here which might interest him a good deal.

Conference this afternoon with C.W. and various officials on proposals (1) to put towels on the coupons, (2) to up-point various garments, including fully-fashioned stockings and woollen underwear, but (3) to down-point women's unlined woollen jackets. C.W. doesn't like this at all, and I agree to defer decision until we have seen how far Portal can get in hammering against the requirements of the Service Departments.

Williams Thompson to dine with me.

DIARY

1. 10. 42 (contd.)

I found W.T. intelligent and attractive. He has a good knowledge of Scandinavia and the small Baltic States.

2. 10. 42

Lyle and Howling to see me on the way to my officials. I tell Lyle that we are acting on the lines of his Addendum. He seems reasonably friendly to our plans. It is very important to nobble the N.C.T.

Conference at F.O. on (1) Relief and (2) clothes for Russia. A.E. very agreeable and hands me his reply to my letter and Paper. L.R. most anxious that we should not discourage the Americans by making too many difficulties about their draft for the organisation of Relief. He says he had quite a useful talk with Maisky, who, he thinks, misunderstood a good deal of their intentions. Agreed that, at the right moment, A.E. and I, with L.R., should see Maisky.

My officials, who think I have been much too resistant to letting the Russians have clothes, have now concocted a list of available supplies worth £3,000,000, of which 5% only represents the value of second-hand clothes. A.E. thinks this is very handsome. But we must insist on controlling all supplies through B. of T. Lintott and Wilson (taken over by F.O. from Cripps: intelligent and, I understand, less of a prig than he used to be) are to confer with T.U.C., Red Cross, etc.

Portal to see me and C.W. on his enquiry into standards of non-operational Service equipment, which we are anxious to get reduced. He talks as though he were sympathetic to the civilian claims, but is shortly leaving for U.S.A. When he comes back, he must get on with this job and will be assisted by C.W. and one of the Under-Secretaries at the Ministry of Supply.

To W.L. in the afternoon.

3. to 5. 10. 42.

At W.L. Saturday (3rd) was a perfect summer day, so that I could have tea out of doors. Sunday was nearly as good.

/Weeding

-2-

Weeding fruit garden, feeding Adco heap, and doing a lot of other odd jobs in the garden. Also reading Carr's two books, as noted later.

5. 10. 42

Back from W.L. to a rather tiresome afternoon on Children's Footwear. I receive a deputation jointly from the C.W.S., the Multiple Shops, and the Boot Manufacturers. They all say there is a great shortage of children's footwear. Durston is rather unhandy with them and argues at too great length. I try to shut the thing down but without success. In fact there is a great shortage, not only of rubber but also of leather, in prospect.

G.J. to see me to fix up procedure on our Inter-Departmental Committee. A.E.'s last letter to me is very friendly, and I say that I am quite prepared to agree to Malkin as Chairman.

E.H.Carr to dine with me. An angular, personally unattractive, but quite intelligent person. On home affairs he is very progressive; on foreign affairs very clear-headed on the whole, but with patches of obsession. "Utopians", League of Nations, Poles, Germans. (I spent last week-end re-reading his two books, "Twenty Years" and "Conditions of Peace".) He says to-night that his great aim is to prevent Germany and Russia combining after this war. He will be a useful ally, on home affairs certainly, in the "Times" office. He agrees that the present P.M. is indispensable, but also that he is "très mal entouré", and thinks it absurd that he should not sometimes say something striking on post-war affairs, even, e.g., that we shall not tolerate unemployment any more.

6. 10. 42

I agree to let my name go forward for the A.C., estimating that, though there is a small "map room gang" which is campaigning against Ministers generally, they will not get very far, though they may push off one or two. Walker has withdrawn his name, after consenting to nomination by J.W., and Ridley, whom I press to stand, says that he wants to reserve all his energies for next year, when he will be Chairman of the N.E. He finds our new recruits deplorable and says that, if we could only get into

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-3-

Dublin saltshack for Mr Hamilton

the House E.D., H.G. and M.A.H., with a few more like them, we should soon revolutionise the Parliamentary atmosphere and the reputation of the Party in the country. Leslie tells me that he is over 65, but that he has replied to the D.M.A. that age is no criterion of fitness, that he is much fitter than many younger men, and that the question of next time must be decided between his Union and his D.L.P. Willie Stewart says that he is 65 - though he doesn't look it - and that he understands the recent D.M.A. resolution was taken as a result of the Spennymoor row and influenced by Laski's letter to the press. I say that Lawther attacked Laski for this. He replies that he thought this was a bit of a sham fight. There will clearly be a good clearance in County Durham next time!

Weekly Progress Meeting on Retail Trade. H.G. has been most industrious, and some progress has been made. I hope to be able to make a statement next week. Meanwhile, C.W. and I will tackle K.W. on financial help for investors in the Retail Traders' Fund.

7. 10. 42.

Lunch with J.W. to meet Nevison, Lord Shrimp of Morecambe. A nice little man who would like us to stay with him when we pay our visit to W.Cumberland. He could also, if furnished with coupons, provide a car.

On leaving, run into Maurice Webb, who has evidently inspired the article in the Sunday Pictorial on Labour Leaders. He is, as usual, full of idea that there will soon be Cabinet changes. I ask why. He says because they must appoint a new Viceroy of India. Various names are being mentioned for this.

H.G. dines with me and reports reasonable progress, particularly with N.C.T., on Retail Trade proposals.

J.G. comes in afterwards and tells me of a somewhat stormy meeting of the L.R. Committee to-day, during which J.M.K. said that if the Anglo-Soviet Treaty meant what Ronald and C.J. said, the F.O. ought to get a new legal adviser, and at the end of which L.R. said that he would put in his report and that the F.O. could make "any dissenting noises they please". G. added that no-one there except the F.O. officials, who saw telegrams about our relations with Russia, realised how difficult and, indeed, dangerous, these were. Therefore, it was most important to do all we could to conciliate the Russians, nor would it be a bad thing to let the Americans know that we were paying heed to the

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Russians and had a second string to our bow. G. thought that L.R. had gone about Washington canvassing in favour of a Seven-, rather than a Four-, Power Policy Committee. This had been contrary to his instructions. The Canadian claim had been much exaggerated. I said that I thought the wrangle at this meeting showed that officials could not really be safely left to discuss any important questions, but that it should all be taken on the Ministerial plane!

I also showed him the letter which I propose to send to A.E. and W.J. on the Official Committee on Reparations, etc. All this is now going very well. He was amused when I told him that Bellairs was evidently acquiring a great influence over W.J.

8. 10. 42.

Lepus to see me. Rather hesitant to accept my invitation to become my Adviser on Utility Furniture.

Long sitting with K.W. and our two Parliamentary Secretaries on Retail Trade financial assistance. The Committee of officials (I.E.P. under Hurst's Chairmanship) have been very busy inventing repercussions in every direction and pleas for further delay. I and C.W. press strongly for our original proposal of a cheap loan at the end of the war equal to, say, half of the sum invested by the trader in approved securities, Crookshank, by nature a most perfect Treasury official, takes readily to all this nonsense, but it is finally left that K.W. will have a meeting of his officials to-morrow at noon to decide his attitude. He will let me know, and my next step must depend on how far, if at all, he will move. I insist that I must make a statement next Tuesday, as the proposals are beginning to leak out in the press. (Incidentally, some of the leak is inaccurate, which is a good thing, but we can't let this go on many days longer.

Spend the evening after this meeting with C.W., with whom I have a very friendly talk ranging over many topics and persons, both shop and non-shop.

DIARY9. 10. 42

Lunch with Raczynski to meet a collection of Poles and of British Foreign Office officials, including Strang, Gwatkin, FitzMaurice (still at M.E.W., though, as I say to him, I am sorry I never could find much for him to do because there seemed to be so little law in this war) and G.J. I am the only Minister present. I don't know quite why the party is made up like this, but it all goes along very happily, the Amb. being incited by me to give a long address on the mediaeval relations between Poland and Lithuania. The Poles all say that Lithuanian was never a literary language but only a peasant dialect, closely akin to Sanscrit, and that White Russian, though it has no literature in the full sense of the term, was, in the Middle Ages, the liturgical language of the church and all that queer borderland.

L.R. to see me in the afternoon, very hot under the collar against the F.O., who, he says, have "gone all Russian" - this is on the question of "consultation" over Relief - and have been sending telegrams, while he was in Washington, without consultation with any other Department, against Canadian participation in the Relief Policy Committee. I say that I think there has been unnecessary heat and friction over all this and that Ministers will have gently to tidy up what officials have furiously flung about. It is really two storms in one teacup!

To W.L.

12. 10. 42

Back from W.L.

L.P. National Executive holds a 2½ hours inquest into the misdemeanours of Laski. Unsuccessful efforts are made to introduce those also of Shinwell. Walker says that he knows that Laski approached Bevin a little while ago and asked him whether he would run for the Leadership against Attlee. L. is very nettled at this, but admits that it is true, adding that B. at once turned it down. (C.R.A. is present through all this.) L. says, looking across at me and E.B., who are sitting side by side, that he has completely lost confidence in C.R.A.'s leadership

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and thinks there are only two possible alternatives, one of which is E.B. He does not name the other, but no doubt he remembers that he made a similar proposal to me, which I received without warmth. (Shinwell next day said that Laski ought to be expelled from the Party for intriguing, though not a Labour M.P., about the Party Leadership, a matter lying within the jurisdiction of the Parliamentary Labour Party!)

Conference with C.W., A.O., G.L.W. and H.G. on my to-morrow's statement on retail trade. Later, after dinner, put the final touches to this statement in consultation with J.W., G.L.W. and H.G. It has no financial tail in view of J.W.'s refusal to agree to cheap loans after the war, but the rest is pretty convincing I think.

13. 10.42.

Quite a lot of questions, all of which go quite well, and a long statement at the end of questions on Retail Trade. The interest in this is submerged a bit by the P.M.'s statement on the chaining of prisoners, but the House, and especially the Tories, receive my statement very well. There are no supplementaries hostile to my scheme, though a number of requests for further information.

Ask Malkin to see me and discuss with him the procedure to be followed on his committee of officials to consider Reparations, etc. We agree that they need not have any exact terms of reference, but may proceed to deal with the three papers - Treasury, D.O.T. and my own - in the light of the Ministerial correspondence, of which I will send him a complete copy.

14. 10. 42

The press is quite favourable, though not ecstatic, - but why should they be? - on my Retail Trade statement. Mr Howling is completely sold on it, and I have a most cordial telephone conversation with him. He has issued a good statement to the press and he tells me that his Chairman, Lyle, is also most favourable.

Summon Craig Henderson and hand him officially copies of my statement and my answer to Leslie, to the effect that H.M.G. have decided not to adopt the principal recommendation of the Retail Trade Committee and that I am in touch with the Chairman regarding

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"the future of the Committee" (deliberately not "the future work"). I try to lead the old fool in the direction of thinking that his Committee had better, if not disband themselves, at least go into cold storage. I show him his terms of reference, which he had forgotten, which requires the Committee to examine "the present problems of the retail trade", having regard, inter alia, to "the post-war situation". This does not really cover, I point out to him, the post-war problems of the retail trade. The chief of these problems, in any case, is whether or not there should be a legal restriction on the right to set up shops, and, on this, I assure him that either he or I, since we both know all the arguments on both sides so well, could make a most convincing speech on either side. But it is certain that the Government will not be disposed at present to take a decision either way. Moreover, since Lyttelton set up this Committee, the Paymaster General has been made responsible for post-war planning, and possibly, therefore, this problem should now pass to him. C.H. will summon his Committee at an early date and let me know their views. I hope this may result in a collective resignation. My aim is to kill this Committee by kind words.

Mrs P. asks some of us to lunch to meet Winant, whom I have so far seen surprisingly little. He has great charm of manner, a great underlying earnestness, great good will, I am sure, and a certain amount of superficial twinkle. In addition to C.R.A. and myself, there are present J.W., Arthur Jenkins and I.T. Mrs P. now wants to ask "some of the younger people in the Labour Party" to meet persons of eminence, and she leaves the choosing largely to me.

See Somervell, just on the eve of leaving for Washington, and give him a personal note to Halifax. He will, I think, and I am pretty sure he thinks, have a very pleasant time over there, away from the close strain of war and from the blackout, and with plenty of salads and fruit juice. He will also, I am pretty sure, get on quite well with the Americans.

"Pre-view" of Utility Furniture at the Building Centre, Maddox Street. The Committee have done very well and the exhibition, though not yet quite ready for the public, is really most encouraging. Prices are a problem, and K.W. is still refusing to consider taking off the purchase tax before the next Budget. But, even so, we shall be able to claim that the prices will be substantially less than those now being charged in most shops. C.W. appears and is very shy at joining in with me in front of the news-reel men.

/Dine

-4-

Dine with J.W., I.T. and Hector McNeile and swap yarns on Government, Civil Servants, etc. H.M. is quite intelligent and reasonably young, though not, of course, in the same class as I.T.

15. 10. 42

H. Johnston
 Meeting with H.J. and principal officials on commercial policy. I tell them frankly that, until now, the B. of T. has played a dreary and inert part, in comparison with the Treasury and other Departments, but that, now that changes have been made in the personnel, etc., I hope and expect that we shall be much better. We have before us H.G.'s relatively short and audacious paper on Commercial Union, and a much longer document by L.R. and Clay giving both a long historical survey - "background" they call it - and a rather unemphatic and lengthy series of suggestions on future policy. Clearly some present want to give the latter precedence, in time and status, over the former. But this I won't have. So it is finally agreed that first we will take H.G.'s paper and consider any amendments which anyone may care to send in within a day or two, and then send this forward to the committee of officials, with a status intermediate between that of a "cockshy", a term which A.O. uses at the beginning of our discussion to-day, and a full-blooded "Board of Trade Paper" backed by the express approval of the President. Then, after a short interval, the L.R.-Clay paper should also be sent forward, but only after making sure that there is nothing in the second part of it inconsistent with the first paper. I have to bear down a certain reluctance by some of the officials in order to get this procedure accepted.

At H. of C. I gather that a number of Labour M.P.s think I have taken quite the right line over the small shopkeeper. Since the 1922 Committee's sub-committee on small traders has also given this morning a grudging grunt of approval, I am really very well away, for the moment.

Press conference on furniture this afternoon. This again seems to go very well, and I hope the papers will come out all right to-morrow. I have all the members of the Committee present sitting in a row, and also, in addition to officials, Forres, who is looking after the concentration of ~~the~~ ^{like} the industry.

Thence to Ministerial "Reconstruction Committee". We first take the Buffer Stocks paper, Keynes being present to expound it. Initial opposition, even to its being discussed with the

Dominion representatives who are coming over shortly, from Hudson and R.A.B., the latter of whom appears shamelessly at the meeting in the guise, not of an educationalist, but of a British farmers' attorney. Finally they are squared by an undertaking that a statement will be added saying that the proposals in this paper do not prevent any Government from pursuing any policy which it thinks fit in the interests of its own producers. The stabilising procedures recommended in the paper are only to be an international basis on which a number of national super-structures may be built. It is most irritating that, whenever any good and bold proposal is put forward, it always encounters a block of opposition from someone. It is then attempted to rush through a complicated paper on Demobilisation. But I protest, having only had the paper yesterday. It is therefore postponed until next week.

16. 10. 42

L.P.'s Cttee., as a result of which I am now to take over the control of books as well! That I should do this had been recommended by a committee of officials chaired by O. Peake. Bracken and R.A.B. both dislike this, and the latter, beside whom I sit, injudiciously leaves lying under my eye the draft of a letter from himself to B.B. in which he says that he does not like at all this proposal, and that either he or B.B. should take on the job. I say, quite early, that I am personally quite indifferent as to whether I or someone else takes charge, but that I am sure that there should be a single Minister in charge and not a Ministerial Committee. At this point I look fixedly at B.B. - he and I recalling, I am sure, each equally vividly, our past clashes - and he at once assents. Several other members of the Committee, including the Chairman and E.B., are strongly for my taking it. If it should be thought, says the Chairman with a smile, that spiritual and cultural values would be ignored by the materialist President of the Board of Trade, he felt sure that I should be most willing to consult my colleagues, and that a standing committee of officials to advise me would be most useful and, he was sure, quite acceptable to me. I thereupon observe that the Archbishop of Canterbury is a member of my Board of Trade, though I have not lately summoned him to any of my meetings, and that only yesterday I was accosted by the Chaplain to the House of Commons on a most spiritual problem, namely, the supply of clothing coupons for the choir and vergers of Westminster Abbey. E.B. adds that, after all, I was pretty spiritual myself

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in the last generation, and, further, that he has a very good working arrangement with the Board of Trade regarding labour and doesn't want to have to start all over again with the Ministry of Information or any other Department. And so, with thanks to O. Peake for his valuable labours, the thing goes through, after a snub has been administered to the British Council, whose paper allocation, we decide, is to be made not direct, but through the F.O.

On retail trade, K.W. had put in what C.W. had described in a Minute to me as "a singularly unimpressive and provocative paper", arguing against my proposal for cheap post-war loans to small traders returning to business. I said this morning, however, that I was not going to fight the Chancellor on this, since the statement I had made this week had gone over very well, both with Parliament and press - even some Labour M.P.s, who I had thought might attack me on the ground that I had fallen, for the second time, into the hands of the 1922 Committee, having praised my announcement. I was, therefore, prepared, at any rate until I had set the new machinery in motion and gone some way with the compilation of the Register, to leave on one side all purely post-war questions. But I reserve the right to raise this matter again later. E.B., most benevolent to me this morning, says that my scheme had been generally welcomed as "an excellent Socialist plan".

Thorpe to see me on laundry costs, licensing authorities - shall the Distributive Unions be represented on this? - , the position of his Committee, and the need to strengthen his staff and to speed up his price-fixing operations. I am sure that I made a good choice in picking this man, but it is essential, and becoming rather urgent, to give him more skilled assistance, particularly since the departure of Frost. I ask H.G. to take this in hand without delay.

Receive a joint deputation from the R.D.A., Multiples, and Co-ops on requisitioning of shops. I make an opening allocation on the increasing gravity of the war, the very easy time that they have all had so far, the contrast between London and Stalingrad, and the prospect that they will soon have to surrender large quantities of space. They take this reasonably well, but soon drag the conversation round - particularly the R.D.A. and that wretched creature Roskill, who has crawled in as some sort of spokesman of the Multiples - to my statement of policy on retail trade. They clamour to be represented on the new Joint Sub.Cttees. I am very discouraging on this. I say I want the Committees to be

/small

small and practical, not just talking shops. Whenever one forms a new committee, I say, everybody clamours to be on it. I am resisting many other claims. Primarily the Committee is to consider the grievances of small retailers. I never heard it said that large shops got less than their fair share of the available supplies. Those present had never represented that to me. I conceded, however, that when a plan was put up to me for approval which seemed to affect their interests, I would be willing to hear their representations before approving it. In any case, they could keep in touch with my Department. Roskill, tactless and typical of his race at its most irritating, bores on and on with supposed dilemmas, between the needs of the war effort in the obvious sense, and the importance of enabling the public to shop without inconvenience, failing which, morale and, with it, the war effort, would collapse. I tell him rather tartly that he is only chopping logic. After the meeting H.G. tells Barber, who is a clever little chap, very quick at the uptake, that the R.D.A. are making frightful fools of themselves, and that they will be in a much better position to defend their interests if they are not on the Committee, than if one of them is on in a minority. For then, when the Committee reports to me, I shall be able to say that everyone had been heard, including the R.D.A., who have a man on the Committee anyhow, and that therefore I can go straight ahead without further reference to them.

I offer Weir the Chairmanship of the Committee on Pottery. He accepts with alacrity and says that he is quite sure that Duncan will raise no difficulty. He will speak to him about it to-night and let me know. Duncan knows that he is still spending a good deal of time on pottery and will regard this as just a part of his ordinary work.

I confer also with A.O., Barlow and H.G. on other Chairmen. In order to avoid the accusation that any of the three chairmen has even a tenuous interest in the trade concerned, I am now inclined to ask Beale to take, not hollow-ware, but clothing, which anyhow is the most important of the three.

Watkinson tells me that a suggestion has been made - by Lintott of all people - that we should now offer to the Ministry of Labour a withdrawal of labour from the clothing industry on the basis that next year we will cut the civilian basic clothing ration down to 40. I say that I will not hear of this. I will only make any substantial concession on the present labour force in clothing as a result of a full discussion in the L.P.'s Cttee. He is quite in agreement with this. If we are not careful, we shall repeat with clothes the experience of coal. We shall let the

labour go, and later, finding the output dangerously short, clamour ineffectively for its return. On the other hand, we can make some contributions to E.B. on fur coats - I hear that there are still 4,000 people making these - as well as on furniture, retail trade, etc. Lintott is much too quick not only at seeing the point of view of other Departments, but of going prematurely half way to meet them.

Watkinson thinks that this week, what with the retail trade statement and the utility furniture exhibition, has been the most successful we have ever had. Retail trade now looks, for the moment, pretty peaceful. But we have only escaped what might have been a most violent storm by the exercise of great skill and patience, and by the expenditure of much labour. As to utility furniture, W. thinks that we are now establishing new standards which will long outlast the war and exercise a great influence on future taste in all sections of the community.

DIARY18. 10. 42.

To Nottingham with Szapiro to address a Labour Party meeting. This I very seldom do these days. But it is quite a good gathering and I make a speech which gets a good deal of publicity in the press next day, including a laudatory leader in the "Times" (cuttings attached). After the meeting, have some drinks and talk with Bowles, leader of the Labour Group on the City Council, and Roper, Secretary of the City Labour Party. Both solid, sensible men, who think I have done quite right to try to keep the small shopkeepers going. The criticism which I thought might come from Labour Party circles on this has been almost nil, though there was a faint grizzle in Reynolds to-day. Szapiro makes quite a good speech, and it is helpful that a Polish Socialist should be both seen and heard by members of our Party in the provinces.

19. 10. 42

Afternoon at F.O., (1) with Eden and Maisky, and (2) with Eden, C.R.A., Leith-Ross and Ronald.

(1) Before Maisky appears, I tell A.E. that I preached a sermon yesterday, being Sunday, to a Labour congregation on a text from him. He has already seen the speech and is childishly pleased, adding that I shall get him into more hot water now with the 1922 Committee, who have already protested against the speech which I quoted. I say "Why should you and I pretend to differ, because we are nominally in different camps?" He seems to like this.

Maisky also seems to like my clothing offer. I shall be taking out three million poundsworth of stuff for him. When I name this figure, he sits up straight, with a surprised grin, and says "Oh, thank you!" A.E. said afterwards "I have never known the little blighter say thank you for anything before." The stuff is to be distributed by a joint committee of British Red Cross (Mrs Churchill's Fund), the Soviet Red Cross (Mrs Maisky) and the T.U.C., with Board of Trade officials in attendance. We must have full information in order to check what is going on.

(2) I had told L.R. that I thought he and the F.O. officials had been squabbling needlessly and that this was a case where Ministers were required to conciliate their belligerent

/representative

representatives. It is agreed that C.R.A., A.E. and I should send in a joint paper to the Cab., generally accepting the American proposals, but seeking to raise the membership of the Relief Policy Committee from 4 to 7, of whom Canada shall be one. We insist that 7 is an absolute maximum. It is also agreed that the Russians shall be "consulted", and not merely "informed", regarding our intended reply, but that they should be given a fixed time, say, 10 days, in which to make any observations.

Beale agrees, at my request, to take the Chair on my Clothing Retail Committee. Here it cannot be argued that he has the slightest "interest", as it could be with holloware.

Dine with Robin Brook. He says that the whole Czech network is now destroyed. The Germans have simply gone on killing, torturing and imprisoning key people until there is nothing left. Not quite in accord with the easy-oozy theories sometimes current among soft-minded civilised people that you cannot, if you are brutal enough, destroy what you dislike. R.B. thinks it will be almost impossible to recreate this network, though others take a different view. Likewise the Polish network in France has been destroyed, and will be almost impossible to recreate. Here there had been much indiscretion and some mismanagement, and Mikolaiczuk nearly came unstuck over it. Librach, "his stooge", was even more seriously discredited. One consequence is that the Polish military have taken over even more of what were previously civilian activities. Meanwhile, on the other hand, in Poland itself the network remains, with an almost fantastic multiplicity of links. Great success has been achieved both in reinforcing from the air and maintaining wireless contacts.

I tell R.B. what Pile said the other night. He thinks this much exaggerated, and our heavy bombers much less vulnerable than P. had argued. He says that the curve of our losses is not rising, as P. said. At present it simply has no trend, but jumps up and down from raid to raid. The success of the American day bombing is due to their amazing bomb-sight. It is, he thinks, out of the question that the Germans should be able, within a reasonable time, to reproduce this incredibly complicated mechanism, even if they captured one intact. And this it is designed that they should not be able to do, since pieces of the mechanism blow off, according to plan, if there is a danger of capture, or if the plane hits the ground hard. So far, the American fighter has been a great disappointment, and our superiority here is quite unchallenged. General Marshall-Cornwall has just come in as No.2 to M. The reason for this odd arrangement is not clear. Perhaps the General

-3-

is going to take over from M., or perhaps from C.H., for whom R.B. has an increasingly low opinion. He says he blunders over everything, and his bluff will not always carry him through.

20. 10. 42

P.Q.s include one on supplies to Russia, and I take the opportunity of unloading news of our impending large additional consignments, ending up by saying that I am sure the House will agree that we should do all we can to aid our Russian allies, but that all we send must be a subtraction from the ever diminishing supplies available to our own civilian population. This is said in order to create a good atmosphere for resisting further claims for industrial supplements, etc. To my horror, M.Webb in the D.H. next day says that this means an early cut in our own clothing ration, and I have a vision of an ugly rush to all the shops to clean up supplies, and an early exhaustion of the present bunch of coupons. With some little difficulty, J.W. and Simmonds get M.W. to put in a para next day saying that it is not intended to alter the ration during the present rationing period.

Tewson to see me this afternoon, with Woodcock. Very co-operative and reasonable, but a little disinclined that I should see Hallsworth or Hann on matters relating to the Distributive Unions in Retail Trade. They don't want them "to rub out a path to you"! Later, Woodcock rings up to say that Hallsworth would like to see me, and they really have no objection. (Hann belongs to a lower order of Trade Union creation.)

Arrange with Pares, of whom as an official I think better than I did, about control of books. When I succeed at last in getting Owen to the U.S. - it is a damned laborious business - Pares will succeed him as P.A.S.

P.Hancock to dine with me. I have not seen him for some time. He is very cheerful and pleased to see me and other old friends again. He looks back, I think, to the time when he was with me at M.E.W. as much more fun than his life at the F.O.now.

21. 10. 42

The voting for the Administrative Committee has come out very well. J.W. comes in just before lunch to tell me that he has won his bet with me that I should get more votes than any other

/Minister

Minister. I am, indeed, second on the list of 39 candidates for 19 places. I get exactly 100 votes, Jim Griffiths getting 104. If I had not snubbed 5 chaps some time or other, I should have been on top! All retiring members who sit again were re-elected, and, in addition, Montague, Milner and Creech Jones. Shinwell only just saved his bacon, getting 53 votes as against 47 for Dobbie, the highest unsuccessful candidate. Morrison was 4th, but A.V.A. dropped to 10th place with only 79 votes. His remark, "When I brought the Army away from Dunkirk" has been quoted a good deal lately. J.W. says that my vote was distinctly noticed, when announced at the Party meeting, and he himself took steps to inform the press, and told John Carvell to tell Harvie Watt, who, later in the day, when J.W. was trying to get out from the Second Bench, said "Don't give yourself such airs, just because your Chief has got a lot of votes" - this in a most friendly fashion. These relative votes have great importance for a very short time, but after a while all that is remembered is whether one is actually on or off the A.C. or other body. Meanwhile, for the next week, say, I could safely force a major issue almost with anyone, from the P.M. downwards. But, in fact, there is no major issue which I wish to force!

Smuts speaks this afternoon in the Royal Gallery, specially arranged for the occasion, to an audience of M.P.s, Peers, and other notabilities from within the British Commonwealth. It is a remarkable performance, lasting nearly an hour, admirably phrased, and delivered, although read word for word from manuscript, so well as to sustain interest throughout. He has a weather-beaten, outdoor face, which contrasts magnificently with the pale faces of L.G. in the Chair, the P.M. and the Speaker. Simon, the only other occupant of the platform, has a flushed, but not a really healthy, red face. Smuts makes, it seems to some of us, two gaffes. First, he says that we should all be "most grateful for Pearl Harbour", since it brought America 100% into the war. Second, he speaks of the Russians "bleeding Germany white, as only Russia can." On the other hand, he makes one first-class crack in declaring that one of our peace aims must be "Japan for the Japanese".

The P.M., again some of us thought, looked tired, too pale and not very well. He said only a few rotund and complimentary words at the end. L.G., on the other hand, made a quite shocking performance. Pétain to the life! "This terrible and perplexing war". He said nothing to show which side he was on. He has been neutral and defeatist from the start. But to-day he looked very, very old. I think he will fade out soon.

22. 10. 42

News-reel at M.O.I. shows, but only in quite a quick flick, utility furniture and me looking at it.

Tory M.P.s depute to Grigg and me on N.A.A.F.I. and the Army sports goods. This has been going on too long, but the W.O. are, I think, quite firm on it. We go through the motions of promising to consider what has been said, but hold out no hope of change.

Lunch at Drapers' for the first time for some months.

Two hours of Hallsworth. Entirely satisfactory, except that he is so damned slow. No member of the G.C. of the T.U.C. has any sense of time, his own or anyone else's. The last meeting of the Retail Trade Committee was very animated, and he seems to have defended me vigorously against attacks by Mrs Tate and others, which he ascribes to political prejudice. It looks as though the Committee will now break up, several of its members resigning out of pique because I have not adopted their recommendations. This will suit me very well.

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I am in a good patch now.

Retail Trade.

Utility Furniture.

Mittingham speech.

A.C. vote.

So to the Labour Party & to Tories like me a lot!
This comparison with his 4 months ago, when I had just emerged from the coal scuttle.

I hate now had just 8 months at U.S.T.

I hate come to like, rather than resent,
its infinite variety.

And, when the second front opens, people will
take advantage.

DIARY23. 10. 42

Having a quiet morning, I reconstruct my Prod Sheet, and find quite a number of items to enter from scattered slips. This device is the key to efficiency, and I think that probably Ministers can be grouped in two classes, the efficient Ministers who keep a Prod Sheet, and the duds who don't.

The Mexican Minister comes, asking for wool! As Belloc once said in another connection, "He might as well have asked for the stars or fairy gold". I undertake to send him a long-winded story of why he can't have any. Like many diplomats, he has a frightened look, and is no doubt being bullied by his Government at home.

Lunch with Harold Whitehead and a large party to meet a number of important Americans. I sit next to Rieffler, one of the President's economists now doing liaison with M.E.W. I try out on him the notion of swapping large U.S. tariff reductions against corresponding abatement of what the Americans call "discrimination", i.e., imperial preference. I ask if he thinks any harm could be done by such a proposal, made in a friendly tone of voice. He says none. I also say that we must keep State trading in being, since the Russians won't give it up, nor will the New Zealanders, nor can we agree not to engage in it. He thinks that this is all very difficult, but admits that we must face it.

Tobacco is doing well. Maxwell, my Tobacco Controller, comes to see me and makes a much better impression than when he was here before. At that time he was very sick, having just had his appendix out. He has lately paid a most successful visit to America, and our supplies are now reasonably shared, with two weeks' stock, on an average, in every retail shop; a month's supply in reserve, well dispersed; and further reserves with the manufacturers.

To W.L. this evening, taking with me the papers on Commercial Union, which I must put into their final shape myself, having taken account, but not too much account, of all the frightened and too prudent shrieks of my higher officials.

DIARY26. 10. 42.

G.J. for a drink before dinner. Still no letter from A.E. convening Reparations Committee, and G. will "chase this up". It is said to have been with the Private Secretaries four days ago. The F.O. is very inefficient at the P.S. level. I sound G. as to the atmosphere with Russia, and he thinks that it is full of danger. This makes it all the more important that we should give them no excuse to increase their suspicion that we don't really want to co-operate with them, e.g., consultations on Relief Organisation. (A.E.'s letter comes in, quite satisfactory and evidently based on a draft by G., two days later. I nominate Leisching and Clay to represent me.)

27. 10. 42.

Lunch with Meynell (quick and amusing) and afterwards harangue a roomful of A.D.O.s.

In the evening, quite a successful party with J.W., Winster and Bowles. The latter has been feeling, I think, rather neglected, and both he and His Lordship are full of criticisms of H.M.G. J.W. thinks that I handle them so as to make them feel that they were both good friends of ours and yet to remove many of their grounds of criticism, in so far as these are based merely on ignorance, e.g., of the reasons why we say that the British resistance in Greece and Crete postponed the German attack on Russia by 6 weeks.

W. gives a frightful picture of the Admiralty and the way in which A.V.A. is completely in the hands of the Admirals and, in particular, of old Pound. Moore, the Deputy First Sea Lord, is, he says, a complete yes man, and was chosen for this reason. A.V.A., like most other First Lords, is so glamoured by the operational side of the Navy, and by the cocked hats, etc., that he spends all his time ineffectively playing about with this side of the show and leaves untouched the incredible inefficiency of the civilian administration, headed by Markham. Here he could really do good work, but he doesn't think of it at all. It is a constant complaint that "you can never get a decision at the Admiralty", and this is largely the fault of the civil side. Also Admirals returning from the sea to Whitehall, to the ways of which they are quite unused, quickly become more bureaucratic and circumlocutory than even the worst civilian bureaucrats. I notice a tendency, however, on the

part of W. and B. to think that I ought to be taking more interest, if not more share, in the operational side of the war. So long as I am P.B.T., this would mean that, with even less excuse than A.V.A., I was neglecting my primary job for others.

W. is very anti-Commando, both in principle and because he thinks Mountbatten is not big enough to do it. In principle, he thinks, it discourages the general body of the troops. They are told that, when some very daring and important operation is on, it is handed over to these picked forces, because the poor old P.B.I. isn't up to it. In the Navy they have always set their faces against any idea of a "crack ship". Destroyers, submarines, etc., come up for duty according to a roster. They are all on the same footing. I say that I recall that in the last war, the Germans first, with their Storm troops, and then the Italians with their "Arditi" - also known as "Black flames", whence the Fascist badge - went in for picking the eyes out of ordinary units in order to create such special units. Neither we nor the French did this. W. also complained that the Commandos were not numerous enough for large operations. Of M. he said that he was much too meticulous. It has been represented that the success of the Dieppe Raid was illustrated by the fact that the troops had all re-embarked within 20 minutes of the time scheduled for re-embarkation. But how fantastic to schedule a time for re-embarkation, before one knew whether the raid had fully succeeded or not. He said that M. always worked things out on a minute and complicated timetable beforehand, and that this was about the limit of his mental powers. Also that he had now collected around him an enormous staff of hundreds of officers, and that his Intelligence work was done by Casamori, who, I understood, though I did not wish to show too much ignorance, was some kind of celebrity in the world of art. No wonder, said W., that the three Services looked with the greatest disfavour upon so-called "Combined Operations". He told a tale of how M. at his country house, entertaining a large party, asked them all, the night before, what time they wished to leave in the morning. Nearly all of them said 11 o'clock. He then drew out a list whereby Lord A.'s car would call at 10.55, Mr B.'s at 11 o'clock, the Dowager C's at 11.5, etc. All this was announced to the guests. But, through some gap in staff work, it never got into the operational sphere, and next morning the butler asked M. at breakfast what time the various guests were going, and no arrangement had been made about any of the cars.

We spoke also of the Labour Peers. W. said that Addison was very old indeed and could not go on much longer. He had wondered whether Latham would make a good successor. He seemed to him to be well informed and a practised speaker. J.W. very loudly,

Little

and I less loudly but with emphasis, declared against this. Lord L. of London, as we always call him, is in every respect, except in his ambitions, a small man. It seemed to us that W. himself would be much better, and that things should so be worked, if possible, that W. should become now deputy to Addison, so that the succession should come easily. He seemed pleased at this and won't, we think, forget it. How to do it is more difficult. All the rest of the Labour Peers are quite impossible: Nathan, with his creaking Sam Brown belt, Southwood - Camrose had asked W. why S. sat on the Front Bench and W. had replied "The Daily Herald is always found in the front rank", Listowel, always white with stage fright and rather reassured to find that Labour Peers were tolerated after all, Snell, very old indeed and deafer still, and anyhow the Master of the Horse or some such something in the Government, Farrington, a pansy pacifist of whose private tendencies it might be slander to speak freely, Marley, a complete nitwit who had remained in China until it seemed that England was less dangerous - and what else? We remembered nothing else.

28. 10. 42

Labour Party N.E. all the morning. Further desultory discussion on the misdeeds of Laski. H.M. urges him to "undertake not to write again criticising leaders personally, though reserving the right to discuss tendencies, etc.," and little L., with not a very good grace, accepts and the thing is left there.

DIARY28. 10. 42 (contd.)

Postscript from last night. W. told two stories of how the Admirals play up to King Albert. They are awfully good at this sort of thing, and he most easily caught.

1. Returning up the Thames from a Fleet inspection, in some sort of well-appointed craft (I forget its description), accompanied by nine Admirals all in their cocked hats, there was a slight, but only a very slight, disturbing movement on the water. King A., towards the end, turned silent and a little green. For the Admirals, of course, used to tempests in the open sea, the movement was imperceptible, but, as they stepped ashore, one Admiral said "You stood that splendidly, First Lord. I confess I was feeling a bit queer myself towards the end."
2. They were receiving, in the Admiralty War Room, wireless reports of some hot naval engagement. King Albert showed keen, and even slightly emotional, interest in the news as it came through. An Admiral said "I know just how you feel, First Lord. You are saying to yourself 'I wish to God I was in command myself, out in the middle of it all.'"

Ministers' Reconstruction Committee. Slow and dreary as usual. We agree to a demobilisation plan, whereby the order of release will be a function of (a) age and (b) length of service, but not (c) of any application by employers, or of industrial claims. None the less, it is complicated, and I myself think - after the discussion - that it would be better to release men on two separate grounds, (a) and (b), without trying to make a joint table of priority. Thus you would begin by releasing, e.g., all men with more than 4 years service, plus all men over 50, provided in both cases they wished to be released.

Ellen Wilkinson to dine with me. This has been on the cards for some time, but always put off. She is still a most devoted worshipper of H.M., and puts me second. What she would like would be H.M. to lead the Party and me to be his deputy. She would like us two to go into the War Cabinet, putting out Attlee and Cripps. The difficulty about all such plans is that the right moment never arrives to put them into execution! She says that H.M., having been deeply absorbed with his job until recently, is

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now feeling that he has got it into running order, and is taking much more interest in wider questions, including post-war problems and the future of the Labour Party. E.B., she says, - though I think she puts him third in order of merit among Labour leaders, is quite grotesque in his garrulity. She says that he accompanied G.L.G. to a press conference the other day - nominally called by the Ministry of F. & P. - and that he literally talked for 50 minutes, leaving L.G. 5, and then went on to answer all the pressmen's questions. His is an extreme case of what I am beginning to call the General Council disease. They meet in London for a clear day, and there is never any need to be terse. E.W. had a bad knock the other day when her car was run into from behind and she had a fracture of the skull. She tends now to get most excruciating headaches, and she drinks more than one small glass of sherry. Whenever we meet and talk, at rare intervals, she is always planning to bring me and H.M. together. I say that I am always very willing for this to happen. My feelings towards him are entirely benevolent, though I tell her that I know - from J.W., of whom she speaks most highly - that H.M. was much chagrined when he found that I was trying to supplant C.R.A. by A.G. in the early days of the war. But this, as she well knows, because I told her at the time, was because I judged that H.M. had retired so completely to his tent in the County Hall that he would just not have polled the votes required. A.G., on the other hand, had done extremely well at the outbreak of the war, never before or since had he reached the same high standard, and that it seemed to me that any substitution was better than none. But that was a phase which has passed.

29. 10. 42

J.W. tells me a queer yarn of a man called Macdonald who came to see him, and has since written to him, about the formation of a new Centre Party. (I quote, not for the first time, the admirable saying of Harcourt, who knew his practical politics: "I have often heard of these Centre Parties, all centre and no circumference.") J. says that this man M. alleged that he had Sam Courtauld behind him, and that other business men were interested. He had sent J. a long farago of a programme, amateurish but not ill designed to attract support from many quarters. It advocates religion, patriotism, and, in broad terms, private enterprise, but it adds the expansion of public corporations and public utilities, family allowances, the immediate raising of the school leaving age

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to 16, etc. It wants an improved higher direction of the war, with the P.M. no longer Defence Minister, and with members of the Cabinet chosen, not for their Party influence, but for their ability. It is suggested that this might lead to many changes. The leader of the new Centre Party would be chosen later, but meanwhile, provisionally, by those M.P.s from the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Parties who would be willing to join at once. M. has been very pressing for some reply, but J. and I agree that, even at the cost of seeming to be rude, it would be most unwise for him to put anything on paper, or even to initiate a telephone conversation. On the other hand, we think that Ivor Thomas might be used as a willing stooge and encouraged independently to get in touch with this man and find out what he can. I am not inclined to take the thing seriously, but it is mildly amusing.

Attend my first meeting of the Governing Body of Queen Mary College, held at Drapers' Hall. Rather interesting, particularly as Q.M.C. is now housed at King's. Sir Frederick Maurice is a most remarkable man, very quick, inspite of his age, and an admirable Principal, especially in this phase.

Return to welcome Sir W.Citrine, whom I have not seen for a long time. He comes at 4 and leaves at 6.10, two hours and ten minutes, and yet I am always given to understand that he is too busy, on the rare occasions when he is in England, to see anybody! Very friendly, and anxious to get my support for T.U. representation on this and that. This now is his great prestige preoccupation. I hook him for forthcoming afternoon party with the two "high-powered ladies", - Sir T.Barlow says he does not care for H.P.L. - Mrs Churchill and Mrs Maisky, next week to discuss the future arrangements regarding clothes for Russia.

Dine with Frank Platt, as cheerful as ever. I tell him that Duncan has recommended him for a Knighthood and that I have backed this up. He would obviously be delighted to get it. He explains that he does not want it on his wife's account!

30. 10. 42

Lord President's Committee. G.L.G. puts up a proposal to increase the pithead price of coal by 1/8 a ton. This figure is made up of many items, nearly all of which are open to challenge, some on the ground that they are too high, others that they should not properly be charged to the price of coal at all, e.g., because

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they are purely temporary measures which could much better be met from Exchequer subsidy. (H.G. says later that he was very angry when he read this paper, since it is clear that the M.F.P. is now adopting the same attitude towards the coal owners as the Ministry of Agriculture adopts towards the farmers. Since I let coal go, my successor has become President of the Mining (Benevolent Association.) We do not this morning agree to any increase in the price of coal, sending the matter back to be further examined by an inter-departmental committee, where on, in addition to M.F.P., Treasury, B. of T. and War Cab. Econ. Sect are to sit. Inclusion of B. of T. follows a speech by me arguing in detail against most of the items of the proposed increase, and arguing in general that my regulated price structure will be seriously disturbed, even by a small further change. Duncan protests vigorously against the B. of T. having any say in this. It would be enough, he says, for the Treasury and M.F.P. to go into it. I say "I am the trustee for the civilian population" and therefore interested in the prices of clothing, household utensils, etc. He says that he is just as interested in prices, and that the Treasury is the real custodian of the consumer. I say "You make munitions of war; I make munitions of peace." I am a bit vexed with him and show it. But J.A. comes down very strongly on my side, though offering Duncan also to have an official on the Committee. But this he refuses. I tell H.G. that he will have to represent me.

Kwapinski is brought to see me by Szapiro, who is evidently trying to live up to his claim to be K.'s Retinger. Quite a pleasant little talk, arising out of which K. says that he will write me a letter with proposals for discussions we might undertake on Reconstruction.

I speak a word or two to K. in Polish, which creates a great impression. How little succeeds how much with these Slav tongues! Kalina told me the other day that when I had been down and spoken to the Czech Army, having read out from a piece of paper, though no doubt with better than average articulation, a few prepared sentences in Czech, this had created quite a ferment. Most of the older Czechs in positions of authority, civil or military, have quite failed to learn English, and this has caused great impatience among the younger Czechs, particularly the English speakers, such as Kalina himself, who feel that their dumb leaders are failing to make any impression on, or live contacts with, their British opposite numbers. Therefore, when I had gone away, the young, he says, gathered and murmured together "None of our old men can speak a word of English, and yet here is a British Minister who comes to lunch and makes a speech to us in Czech!"

Owen to see me on the eve of his departure for America. How wise I was, in spite of opposition from A.O., to prefer, and to insist upon preferring, Watkinson. Owen has nothing much to say and says it many times. His short point would be that we should at once, banking on a short war, - he himself thinks that it must end next year or else drag on indefinitely - ask the Americans to take care of all our export trade, and "come clean" - a much over-worked and stupid phrase - by offering to cut our civilian clothing ration, etc., to the bone. Several times he tells me that he is speaking very frankly, but only adds that his views are not shared by all officials at the B. of T. He doesn't even tell me who he is getting at.

To W.L. this evening. Q

31. 10. 42 to 2. 11. 42

At W.L. One fine and one wet day. I brought down many previous papers and my own "mind cleaner" in the form of a short memorandum on a "Project for a Commercial Union". I am pledged, to myself and my staff, to revise this paper this weekend. I put off the writing till Sunday evening, though I have excogitated it a bit before, and then sit up with till 1.15 a.m. on -

Monday (2. 11. 42)

- Now I shall have to let officials have one final sniff and grunt at it, and then it must really go on.

Meeting of Home Front Ministers this afternoon, when Jowitt - what a tale that was about Marseilles! - slowly expounds the sort of general statement he might make on Reconstruction in the new session. Some Ministers, notably K.W., are, as usual, for delaying everything. But there is some pressure to get soon at least some first decisions on the Uthwatt and Scott Reports. I say that it will make a most painful impression, in Parliament and in the press, if we can't say something, however general, on the subject in the King's Speech, and if we look like drifting through another session with no decision reached.

Craig Henderson to see me, and to him I read the draft of a letter which I propose to send him, politely winding up the Retail Trade Committee. He takes it very well and doesn't argue back. Indeed, I thank him warmly for his work and sympathise with all his

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difficulties, while observing that I have read the Minutes in which it is recorded that Mrs Tate and others have thrown doubts on my "sincerity" in my new policy. He is a rather pathetic old man and quite unsuited for this task. As he goes out through the Private Office, I am told he says "So this is the end."

Conley comes next, at my invitation, and stays only one hour and five minutes, very short for a member of the G.C. He thinks that I have sent for him to give him some bad news, but I am soon able to reassure him and to ask how they are getting on with clothing concentration, and the Rationing Advisory Committee, and a lot of other things, before, in the last ten minutes, I square him on the Retail Trade Committee. He asks whether I will come and myself perform the funeral ceremonies. I say I think not. He says that he will do it for me. Hann will be indignant, no doubt, and will protest. But Conley does not take him seriously.

Parker brings to me two miners' clothes rationing cases, both from the N.E., which I began to handle last week. The Northumberland mine owners want a special dispensation from making out a list of their employees and handing it over, with unemployment insurance books, to the Employment Exchange. The M.F.P. had encouraged Parker to put up to me on Friday a draft to Bowman, who had written complaining of the owners' attitude, attempting to justify this, though half-heartedly coming down against their claim for special treatment. I had put a pen through this and indignantly dictated a quick reply to Bowman, reassuring him that no workers would lose the supplementary coupons to which they were entitled, by reason of the delay of the owners, for which the mine workers were not responsible. Once more we find M.F.P. acting as the stooges of the owners. It made me very angry. To-day I stiffen up a letter to the owners, saying that they are the only employers in the country who have asked for special treatment, and that they cannot have it, though we will try to help them by recruiting temporarily more clerical aid and giving them a slight extension of time.

The other case is Lawther's complaint that a master-weighman has received his supplementary coupons, though the men's check-weighman, sitting up beside him, is told he is not entitled to them, and that all check-weighman are writing in from all over the country to Red Hill complaining of this. This incident is alleged to have taken place at Harton colliery, but enquiries over the weekend appear to establish (1) that no industrial coupons have yet been issued anywhere in Durham, (2) that it is well understood that neither master-weighmen nor check-weighmen are entitled to the supplement, (3) that the master-weighman at Harton has neither
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claimed nor, of course, received, the supplement. Further enquiries are being made to ascertain whether, anywhere else in the County of Durham, there is a slip-up. Lawther, who is a most uncertain ally, or, for that matter, enemy, is sometimes also very slipshod. This seems like such a case.

DIARY3. 11. 42

A heavy day. Morning Cab., when the joint paper by C.R.A., A.E. and myself on post-war Relief and Rehabilitation at last goes through. Poor old Leithers is quite pleased and surprised! My two colleagues ask me to explain the paper to the Cab., which I briefly do. The American scheme for setting up the R. & R. organisation, resulting from L.R.'s talks in Washington, is approved, subject to our reserving the right to move small amendments on detail later, and to the increase of the Policy Committee from 4 to 7 members, so as to include Canada. Discussion hinges mostly on the question whether we should consult the Russians before replying to the Americans. On this the P.M. says that the F.O. are "now putting it about" that we can never speak to the Americans without having first got the permission of the Russians. He appears to be reading from some note. A.E. says that the F.O. have never said this, and that he doesn't know where the P.M. got this idea from. The P.M. says "I know what is going on" and passes across the table the Minutes of the meeting at which L.R. had a row with the F.O., with observations by Ronald marked in red ink. A.E. says "Well, perhaps he was a little pedantic". It seems that Cherwell has been putting the P.M. up to this. At any rate, this is better than his poisoning the P.M.'s mind against the R. & R. scheme, as some of us feared might happen. The P.M. makes a jesting allusion to "These barbarous Asiatics". There is less danger that this may get outside the Cabinet room, since B.B. is not present. Finally, the only amendment made in our paper is to strike out the phrase "in virtue of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty". But the procedure remains that, before replying to the Americans, we inform the Russians that this is how we are minded to reply and invite their observations, but within a time limit of a fortnight.

Thence to Caxton Hall, where I do a War Commentary, which goes pretty well, and then to lunch with the Mayor of Westminster. Simmonds has produced for me a good phrase, which I use in my speech, that from our wartime experiences "a pattern is emerging" for after the war of "fair shares, fair prices, and a healthy simplification in ways of living and in the design of goods in common use".

Tea party of what Sir T. Barlow calls "high-powered ladies". Mrs Churchill and Madame Maisky both come, trailing attendants, and so does Citrine, with Tewson, to inspect a quantity

of garments made of rabbit skins, etc., which I am now prepared to liberate for export to Russia. It goes pretty well until Mrs Churchill's Jewish attendant, Sir Arthur Abrahams, tactlessly raises the question of money. Who will pay for this nearly £3,000,000 worth of supplies? Thereupon, the Maiskaya starts to be very awkward. She says her Government want drugs more than clothes, and all the money available should be spent on drugs. She almost gets as far as saying they don't want any clothes at all, even though it is explained to her that all the drugs available for Russia from now to next June have already been ordered, and that there are surpluses in all the three Funds after these have been paid for. I didn't want to be too much of a Chairman, but should have liked to put my thumb on Sir A.A. However, it is finally left, after a good deal of confusion and not entirely good-tempered talk, that Sir T.Barlow should take the Chair next week at a meeting attended by the substitutes of the Big Three, and go into all these questions of detail. Mrs C., descending in the lift, said of the Maiskaya "Poor thing, I often think she doesn't understand English very well." (Next day Maisky rings me up and I say "I had a very pleasant tea party here yesterday". He asks, rather ironically, "Was it a very pleasant party?" Evidently his wife had given him an exaggeratedly qualifying description of the scene. I insisted that it was very pleasant, though I added that some rather irrelevant discussion had taken place about money. He said he thought it was a great mistake that money was mentioned. I said I agreed, and in any case it did not concern me, whose only duty was to provide supplies. Money must be discussed between the F.O., the Treasury and himself. He quite agreed. I said that I had told Sir T.Barlow to rule out of order next week any further discussions about payment.)

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Officials, including Sir S.Low and M.Williams, with H.G. also present and evidently not fully sharing their view, try to make me have second thoughts about the revocation of Mrs Sherman's licence to sell millinery in the Whitechapel Road. (Her husband had been convicted of a serious black market offence while the couple were at Leicester, whither they had fled from the Whitechapel Road during the blitz; he had been fined a considerable sum and sentenced to six months' imprisonment; on appeal, he had been let off the imprisonment but the fine had been maintained; a licence had been given to Mrs S. by the local Price Regulation Committee, who were unaware of Mr S.'s conviction; my attention had been drawn to this by Stoker Edwards, M.P., and I had at once made a Minute ordering that the licence should be revoked, and taking the line that it would be rightly impossible to defend in Parliament the grant of a licence, in competition with honest traders, to a convicted black-marketeer or to his wife, since it was clear that

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the two were in business together; B. Jammer, a malodorous Jewish solicitor, ex-Liberal M.P. for Whitechapel, now Labour candidate against H. Nicolson in West Leicester, has now taken up this lady's case with great energy, and says that they have never been together in business and that they have only been married for two years; it appears, however, that the man Sherman told one of my inspectors that "they" had been in business together for the past 17 years, and added particulars of various places where this business had been carried on over this period.) I agree, rather reluctantly, to extend the licence for one more week, during which I will ask Stoker Edwards whether he really has good evidence that these two are jointly in business. I do so in due course, and he is quite sure that this is so. Both of them have obtained certificates from Jewish doctors to the effect that they are in serious ill health. This means, Edwards points out, that when the woman Sherman is suffering from hysteria, anaemia, migraine, and the various other ills which are said to be part of her daily trials, the man Sherman will operate behind the counter. They are, moreover, living together above the shop. I therefore told Low, a few days later, that the licence is to stand revoked at the end of next week.

G.J. comes in for a drink before dinner, and I tell him of to-day's Cab. He is rather shocked at the P.M.'s ejaculation, but says that A.E. does tend to think that Ronald is "pedantic". We speak of the composition of the Reps. etc. Committee and he says that Malkin doesn't want Keynes to come on. He also thinks that K. might "over-weight" the Committee. I say that I don't want him on, because his famous book on Economic Consequences showed a deplorable bias: pro-German and anti-everybody else, including French, Poles, Italians and Americans. I say that I am sending Liesching and Clay. (A day or two later I find that I can dispense with Clay and substitute Meade.)

George Ridley to dine in my office with J.W. G.R. is very delighted, but he is a self-consciously sick man and very slow to reach any point. He is, however, very well disposed and very sensible on most important questions.

I am ashamed of feeling tired when I get rid of him. He was, perhaps, the last slow straw which broke down my reserves of energy.

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4. 11. 42

Receive P.B. Pearson, Chairman of the Stock Exchange. A solemn, cautious, and correct man, accompanied by "a Mr Wilkinson" not this time "a clergyman", but his Vice-President, who says nothing during our interview. Sir E. Hodgson supports me, and I explain that I have asked Mr P. to give me the benefit of his views on certain proposals designed to diminish the evils liable to arise from the practice (1) of nominee shareholding, and (2) of dealings by Directors in the shares of Companies which they direct, I say that I regard the Stock Exchange as the custodians of our financial purity and honour (wow! wow! This was rehearsed.) Mr P., most anxious, as I heard from scouts (Francis Cooke through J.W.), not to be hustled this morning into saying yes or no to any proposition, is much relieved when I merely hand him a memorandum and invite him to study it, with the aid of any appropriate committee he may have on hand, and let me know his views in due course. If I get the S.E. behind this scheme, I am inclined to go ahead with it, even if others oppose it.

Leithers to see me this afternoon. He seems rather sick, having lately had a small operation which has left stitches still in him, and suffering also from a chill, but he is cheered up by our success on his affairs in the Cab.

See "In which we serve" at the Curzon. A very moving Naval film, the only criticism of which can be that Noel Coward, as the Captain, makes too many speeches to his men. This will have tremendous value in the U.S., and already a most enthusiastic message has come in from the American Distributors that they are inexpressibly honoured, etc., to distribute "this film of films".

Dine with Heeley, of Parnall's Aircraft Construction Company, at the instigation of Gilbert MacAllister, now Heeley's labour adviser. I think the latter is wanting to prove to his employer that he can produce at will a Cabinet Minister to dine, even though there is no close Departmental interest. I think well, however, of G.M., and, hearing that he may be in the running for the succession to Duncan Graham, I undertake to do what I can, and write next day to C.R.A. and G.S. supporting his claims. He is only 35, has already fought two elections for the Party, one very difficult and disagreeable in N. Lanark against Jennie Lee, when he was bottom of the poll in a three-cornered fight won by a Tory. He has a good range of interests, including Town and Country Planning and New Zealand, for whose Government in London he acted

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for a while as Publicity Officer. He is also one of my personal admirers. Heeley does not impress me greatly, but is doing interesting things, especially in dispersing his factories in small units in Gloucestershire; a very good example of ruralising industry, on which subject I am more and more fanatical.

5. 11. 42

Open Pottery Committee, Weir in the Chair (and next day open Holloware Committee, with Carmichael in the Chair. The members all look exactly alike, sitting in two long rows each behind large round glasses!) To complete the trio, I send a note to Beale for the first meeting of his Clothing Committee. I hear after from H.G. that some of the members talked a bit, whereat Beale, in his loud, deaf man's voice, shouted "When I take the Chair at my Board meeting, when I say a thing, it is accepted. We mustn't have too much talk here."

Preston

To Denham Studios with J.W., G.P. (representing the official side of the B. of T., both A.O. and P.L. having fallen out, pleading urgent Committees) and Willy Hall, who is now paid by the film producers to be their Vice-Chairman and look after their interests in Parliament and with the Departments - much more fun than being the Finance Officer of the Labour Party! We are shown a number of interesting things and then lunch with Arthur Rank, the big financial noise in British film production, who strikes me as a first-class Methodist humbug. He says that his real interest is in religious films, but he has gradually been led to take an interest in films as a whole. I should not trust him far.

Liesch

Visit with Simmonds the Make Do and Mend Exhibition. All very clever, and keeping occupied large numbers of ladies of every sort all over the country.

A.O., P.L. and Helmore to see me on the B. of T. interest in the F.O. paper on the Reform of the Foreign Service. Evidently the F.O. officials are playing for time, but I agree to write to A.E. putting two points, one on higher appointments in the Commercial Diplomatic Service, now proposed to be fused with the Foreign Service generally, the idea being that these could be made jointly by the Foreign Secretary and the P.B.T. on the recommendation of a Committee on which the B.T. and D.O.T. should be represented; the second a minor point relating to the Trade Commissioner Service. I write to A.E. a letter praising the plan

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as a whole, but enclosing a draft paper which I should submit, when his W.P. comes up, simultaneously to the Cab.

Lebus, E. Denby and Simmonds to dine at the Etoile. E.D. has the most frightful cold and cough, but is otherwise in good form, and the party goes off quite well. I think that Lebus will now feel that he knows me better. He talks quite progressively, and I should think with reasonable sincerity.

6. 11. 42

Rush through a lot of odds and ends this morning and then with J.W. to Morecambe. Stay the night with the Nevisons, who are very good hosts. The Mayor, the Town Clerk - who made a very excellent impression upon me, being full of health, energy and decision - and several other local notables come in after dinner. J.W.'s friend, Freddie Board - also, apparently, an admirer of mine who claims to have read a number of my books - is also with us. There is a trade link between Nevison, J.W. and Board through razor blades.

7. 11. 42

J.W., Board and I, with Nevison as driver, set out in the latter's car for our two-day inspection of West Cumberland. (Details on separate sheet.) We drive to-day through lovely Lakeland country, Carnforth - Keswick - Cockermouth - Maryport. At Keswick we stop for a drink and hear that the mother of Sir E. Hodgson lives here. She is 91 and bed-ridden, but J.W. rings up her attendant and conveys appropriate messages. At Cockermouth we meet that remarkable man J.J. Adams with a number of others, and from here our official tour begins. It is an amazing transformation. West Cumberland, five years ago quite derelict, now hums with life and work and novelties. We spend to-night at Moresby Hall, called after the Admiral, after whom Port Moresby in New Guinea is named. It is an old sixteenth-century house, now centrally heated, with immensely thick walls filled out with shingle from the shore. The man who took the contract for the central heating went bankrupt owing to the cost of boring through this stuff. He didn't know, when tendering, what the walls were made of. This is now the Guest House of High Duty Alloys, a most progressive Company who have established a large Works at Distington. I am much impressed by Woodward, who is in charge there.

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-6-X 8. 11. 42

Next day, completing our tour, we get back to Morecambe for the night. Frank Anderson, God's most crashing bore, spends part of to-day with us and would have spent the night as well had we been rashly staying in a hotel. But, when J.W. explains that we are in a private house, he has to separate himself from us.

TORCH
It was this morning, going round Pattisons Mills at Whitehaven, that a police inspector first told us the news of the American landings in French North Africa. And so, through this amazing weekend and the next days, the news poured in. "This is not the end; it is not even the beginning of the end, but it is perhaps the end of the beginning". In this admirable and characteristic phrase, the P.M. two days later summed up the situation. I said "We can see the great tide turning to-day on the North African beaches." This, following so fast on the great victory of the Eighth Army, changes both the immediate, and the ultimate, prospects of the war, and still more changes all our feelings. The critics of the "higher direction of the war" - the Shinwells and the Belishas and the rest - will all have sunk well out of sight and mind to-day. And Crazy Cripps will have to think again about the prospect of the P.M. falling from power and find some new excuse for his own resignation from the Government, in time, as he sees it, to save some part of what C.M. so happily called his "mystique".

9. 11. 42

We did
to 1952,
21 was
feared
ME!
Drive along the Front at Morecambe and form the view that it would be an excellent place for a Labour Party Conference, provided only we could get enough accommodation - and I think, adding in Lancaster, we probably could - and I inspect, in particular, the Midland Railway Hotel, very functional, with plenty of dining accommodation but only 40 bedrooms, right on the sea. Speak at the Mayoral lunch, and, having enjoyed a good deal this very varied jaunt, catch a train from Lancaster, reaching Euston at 9.15 p.m.

I was indignant at last week's New Statesman, which, fed by that fat fool Sargent Florence, had a most stupid paragraph on "Retailers in Trouble". This declared that, though I must take a "nominal responsibility" for the Government's policy regarding retail trade, and though, no doubt, I "really agree" with S. Florence

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and his two resigning colleagues, I was probably only "a helpless executant of policies dictated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer." The Economist also had a grizzling paragraph inspired by the same third-rate don. I concerted, however, with J.W. and Board on Sunday night a letter which the latter should sign and send, as from his business office in Sheffield, to the Editor of the Statesman, saying -

"Sir,

Evidently you have never met the President of the Board of Trade, as I have. You think of him as "a helpless executant Chancellor of the Exchequer." Many things can be said about the P.B.T., but not that.....

As a retailer, I welcome his decision to implement the minority report of the Retail Trade Committee rather than the proposal for funeral benefits, and I welcome also his plan for fair shares for sellers as well as buyers."

I wonder whether the respected blighters who run this rag will put this in.

10. 11. 42

Parliament is prorogued. The new session begins to-morrow. K.W. wishes to see me on the Repts. etc. Cttee. He says he is sure that I want it to succeed. I say of course. He thinks then that it should be well manned. He would like to put on Keynes, but thinks that to balance him I should put on Leithers. I say that I am putting on Liesching and Clay, or, if as now seems likely, the latter is soon leaving me, some other good economist. I say that I will not in any case put on Leithers, who reacted, as was his right, to my paper by putting in a statement of his own which showed that his views were far removed from mine and that he could not possibly act as my representative. P.L., on the other hand, is now, in effect, No.2 to A.O. and has quite enough official standing to face any other member of the Committee. I add that I am not at all keen on Keynes coming on, in view of his attitude in Economic Consequences, in which, I point out, he not only showed much disloyalty to his political chiefs of that day, but grossly exaggerated the German case, showed much political prejudice against other states, now again ~~our~~ allies, particularly France and Poland, and is therefore likely to take a wrong and tiresome view to-day. K.W. says that he will

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-8-

Speak to Keynes about this and warn him that he must not run any such line, but he is sure that Keynes would be deeply affronted and hurt if he were left off a Committee dealing with this subject, and he has, says K.W., been most helpful to him in many ways. I say that it is, of course, for him to choose his own chaps and that I only hope he will rub into Keynes the need to weaken Germany so much that she will be industrially unable to repeat her crimes in future.

Dine to-night at No.10, where the P.M. revives the ancient custom of reading aloud to his Ministers behind closed doors the King's Speech. What a lot of Ministers! I am told it is the largest dinner party that has been given for very many years at No.10. All Ministers who sit in the Commons, plus the Mover and Seconder of the Address, plus the Speaker, plus Smuts, Bruce, H.Watt, Bridges and Martin. Smuts makes a most brilliant and unprepared little speech in perfect English after dinner. C.R.A. proposes the health of the P.M., who makes a short reply. We are all very, very happy. I take old Walkden home in my car afterwards. He is to move the Address to-morrow.

11. 11. 42

See Meade, who is coming here to replace old Foot of Clay, who is going, most inappropriately, as I think, to snatch and grab for ships in Washington. Meade will be a great improvement, from every point of view. He seemed less gawky than of old, and less ill than I had been led to expect. He will be an acquisition. At present he is to be part time with me and part time still with the War Cabinet Economic Secretariat, commonly called Anderson's Circus. He will represent me, along with Liesching, on the two important Committees which I have instigated by my memoranda on Reparations, etc., and on Commercial Union. He says that he is really much more keen about the latter, but he appears to be quite sensible about the former also. He confesses that he is also in the habit of influencing Lord Cherwell, who, he says, is very keen on C.U. I say I am delighted to think that one who is apt, sometimes most unhelpfully, to influence the P.M., should, in turn, be influenced by Meade. I was very right to prefer this economist to Harrod.

Lunch at H. of C. and, just before two, we all crowd into the Chamber. The Address is moved this session by Walkden and seconded by young Thorneycroft. Both do well, especially the former, and I doubt whether any private Member from our Party could

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have excelled in eloquence, humour and straightforward horse sense, my Honourable and genial, though aged, Friend, the Member for South Bristol. (There is what J.W. calls a vomit-making row within the Labour Party because Walkden moved the Address rather than John Parker, whose name had been suggested by the Administrative Committee. There had, I understand, been some murmurs against this choice through the "usual channels", the chief point being that Parker is a young man who is neither a Minister nor doing any war service, and it is felt that he would be less useless in the Armed Forces. He is a dreary disappointment and a serious qualification of my general preference for young men over old. It showed a great lack of savvy for the A.C. ever to put up his name for this job. He was once Ellen Wilkinson's P.P.S., but she got rid of him because he was so dull and clumsy and had so little sense either of war urgency or of the reasonable limitations of the political freedom of a P.P.S.)

The P.M. is batting to-day on a very easy wicket, but he runs up a very good score. Never before has he been able to count so many lately hatched chickens of victory. It is observed that all the Higher Critics are either absent, e.g., Wardlaw Milne, or looking sick as mud to think that, without much aid from them, we are winning, e.g., Horeb-Elisha, Shinwell, Stokes, etc.

Mr Yandell is very delighted at being invited to come and see me, and says that things are now going "much better". He has been much obstructed in the past by the accountants, but Watkinson, on my instructions, now sees him once a week and the difficulties seem to have been removed.

I am due to dine this evening with Sir Cecil Weir at 55, Park Lane, which, I learn later, adjoins the Dorchester. Parly Charly asks whether I will give him a lift, and we attempt to start in the car just before 7.45. There is, however, the densest fog to-night that I remember, at least since the last war, and we bump violently first on one curb and then on another. Thereafter, P.C. walks in front of the car holding a white handkerchief behind his tail, while I perform a flanking movement near the curb with an electric torch. (Why we ever tried to take the car along like this, I really don't know, except to prove it could be done.) We arrived, after an hour and a quarter's steady marching, at the Dorchester, having passed quantities of cars and buses marooned and motionless among the mists. We park the car in the Dorchester garage, whence Sullivan goes home, and P.C. back into the mist to try to find his daughter. I spend the night in

/Weir's

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Weir's pyjamas, rather small for me, in Warter's unoccupied flat, since it seemed that return to Millbank would be a quite hopeless adventure. Among the party was a Mrs Tresfon, the first wife of J.W.'s friend at Boulton and Paul's. I asked if she was any relative of Mr Tresfon, whom I had met, and she said "I am his first wife. I divorced him." Seeking to play up sincerely, I said I thought his present wife was frightfully boring. This seemed both to surprise and please her. She has the custody of her three children, and said that Adeline had once been a great friend of hers, but was "as cold as steel". T. has a substantial income and, no doubt, A. had fixed her steely eyes on this.

12. 11. 42

Back in the morning to the B. of T.

Lunch with Krnjevic and Jukic, who put up the usual Croat complaints. They say there is a great row going on within the Yugoslav Government, that the "Pan-Serbs" are trying to re-create after the war a Serbian Dominion, that Jovanovic will never decide anything as Prime Minister, any more than he ever could as Chairman of the Professorial Council at Belgrade. They are against Nincic, who, they say, is still very much in with the King, this inexperienced boy who is completely controlled by a small circle of Serbs, including the famous Three Musketeers, the brothers Knezevic. They speak ill, also, of Gavrilovic, who, they try to excite me by saying, has been denouncing the proposals of the Governments of the United Nations to set up a tribunal to try war criminals. G. says this is all rot, and the people can be trusted to take the punishment of war criminals into their own hands without any legal formalities. I said I had no doubt that this was so, and that every wise German, now outside the pre-war frontiers of the Reich, would take to his heels in good time. As I found before when talking to these silly Croats, it is necessary to drag the Germans into the conversation. Their antipathies are concentrated on the Serbs, not even on the Italians, much less the Germans. They said they were afraid that G.'s attitude was that the Serbs should shoot up the Croats after the war, on the pretext that the latter had murdered many of the former. "And", I asked, "haven't they?" This they could not deny. They bleated on about the undemocratic character of the Yugoslav constitution and of the need for "Federalism". I asked what were the proportions of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and they said 38, 29, and 11%, the rest being German, Magyar and other similar minorities. I said that in this case the Croats plus the

Slovenes

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Before
Tito.

Slovenes outnumbered the Serbs, and they had to admit that this was so. I said that, so long as they were merely asking for equal democratic rights for all, with a constitution to give effect to this, they would command our sympathy, but I added with some emphasis that English people would be most vexed and impatient if they found that Serbs and Croats over here were quarrelling among themselves. They had even tried to prove, when I had praised the exploits of General Mihailovic, that there was as much resistance in Croatia as in Serbia. This is a silly little jealous lie. I said that if their frontiers were extended at the expense of pre-war Italy, it would be the Slovenes who would gain, and there would, therefore, be still less excuse, given equality of voting powers, for complaints about a Serb hegemony. Not a very good lot.

Major Williams Thompson, known to his friends as Mike, spends the evening with me. He is very bright and intelligent and would like to be a Labour candidate. I arrange for him to send me some notes about himself which I will pass on to G.R.S. He is only 27. He says that Mountbatten has surrounded himself with a group of his personal friends, most of whom are not very good at their jobs. Though his relations with the Air Force and the Navy are reasonably good, those with the Army are quite frightful. His principal lieutenant here is Brigadier Hayden, who is thought nothing of in any Army circles, except the Irish Guards. He himself, W.T., is serving under Casamori, described as the Head of the "Intelligence" Service of Combined Operations. The Americans, he says, are frightfully raw at making plans, but very ready to accept suggestions from us, and it was we, in fact, who made all the plans for Torch. The first stages of this had gone well beyond all expectation, but he thinks that, now that the Germans have woken up to what we are after, we shall have heavy losses of ships in the Mediterranean from German air attack. Gen. Giraud is better than de Gaulle, but, according to other information of mine, was very difficult in pre-Torch negotiations, wanting to be given complete command of all land, sea and air forces, French, British and American. This, of course, was not accepted, but on his advice all first landings were made by American troops only, without any British, to minimise French resistance.

13. 11. 42

Discussion on "man power", wherein we contemplate certain very drastic reductions in next year's supplies of clothing,

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pottery, etc. Pares is making a very much better impression on me than he did. He is, H.G. thinks, much better as P.A.S. than as A.S., having less time to run to detail, wherein he is apt to be pernickety and ill-proportioned.

Liesching thinks that the Reprs., etc., Cttee. might be called "Committee on the Economic Penalties to be Imposed upon the Enemy", but Malkin does not like the work "Penalties", and G.J. on the phone with me last night suggested "Committee on Reparations and Economic Security". I said I thought that this, or something like it, would do all right. We must allow both for the discussion of reparations and of the other matters touched on in my paper.

H.G., whom I have not seen much of lately, reports that things are going pretty well on the Retail Trade front, and that Beale is proving quite a good Chairman of the Clothing Committee.

Harcourt Johnston
Lunch, with H.J., A.O. and Mullins, with Henry Morgan, President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, along with whom is Sir Ronald Matthews, who has succeeded Ralph Wedgwood as Chairman of the L.N.E.R., and Sir Geoffrey Clarke, an ex-President of the Chamber, who seems to have spent most of his life organising postal services in India. I thought little of Morgan, but both the other two had sense. Matthews says that I need have no fear for the future of Shildon. It will be needed after the war for great programmes of locomotive construction.

To W.L. this evening.

Before Alamein he never had a victory
 M.A. ... defeat

DIARY

ALAMEIN

15. 11. 42

Lie in bed and hear the joy bells on the wireless from 10.15 to 10.30 - Westminster Abbey, Saint Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, Armagh, Llandaff (blitzed), some small village church in Lancashire, and Coventry (blitzed). Later in the day I hear the sounds also going over the air to French and Italian listeners. It means a lot. The self-respect of the British Army is on the way to being re-established. Last week, when the news was known, a British General was seen to rush in front of the waiting queue at a bus stop and to leap upon the moving vehicle. One onlooker said that he would not have dared to do this a week before.

16. 11. 42

Ministers' Reconstruction Committee. Discussion on Planning and a final agreement that there shall be "a Minister of Planning, assisted by a Commission". It has taken a long time to get this far. Some want to try to define the spheres of the Minister and the Commission, but it is finally agreed, on my suggestion, that this would be a great mistake, since much will depend on personalities - of the Minister himself and of the Commissioners - and on experience. Poor old W.J. is drifting into a situation in which he will have to submit practically his whole speech, to be made during the debate on the Address, to the War Cabinet.

Jositt

Go on to No.11 to discuss with K.W. Utility Furniture and Purchase Tax. In his usual style, he produces Minutes by Crookshank, Hopkins and Barlow, all opposed to the remission of the tax, apparently on the ground that it will be impossible to stop there, and that there will soon be renewed pressure for further remissions. He says, however, that he is prepared to disregard their advice and to take the tax off, if I will give an undertaking not to ask for more remissions. This I agree to do and am reasonably well satisfied with this deal. I tell K.W. that he and I are two of a rather small number of Ministers who understand a deal! He then drops a sneer about Cripps' recent speeches on the future World Order, and we part.

R. and I dine at the Etoile - she being in London for

-2-

one of her rare visits to report to her H.Q. - and I had hoped that we should also have Gouin. But, through some muddle, he doesn't turn up. R. wanted to talk to some Frenchman who had lately come out of France and could give us news of some of our friends. These so-called "Fighting French" are a pretty poor lot, and André Philip, in particular, is very poorly spoken of. He seems to have gone out of his way to vouch for the other man from the Croix de Feu who came over with him without authority from the Home Office. But the latter is now in darkest Africa, and the former in the United States.

17. 11. 42

San
it was | Eight P.Q.s, of which four are not asked on the first round and only one of these is asked on the second round! This second round is a gross abuse and there is some hope that it may be abolished. But no other changes seem likely to be made in the hours of sitting or in any other aspect of the procedure of the House, since when enquiries were made in various quarters, someone or other was opposed to every suggested change.

Mr Spender, recently Australian Minister of Defence, at lunch with Bruce, who, as his habit is, invites about half the Government to meet each other plus one or two Australians. S. seems a sensible, direct sort of chap, and I think I must see him again before he goes back.

Edwards, of the Bank Officers' Guild, to see me. There is increasing prospect of the recognition of his Organisation. Already Barclays have "recognised" them to the point of holding polite meetings with their representatives, though there is nothing that can be called "negotiation" as yet. K.W. and I, at Citrine's request, are to receive jointly a deputation from the B.O.G. and the Insurance Guild, in connection with the proposals of the Kennet Committee, on the withdrawal of labour from Banking and Insurance.

Pay my first visit to a new dentist, Bruno Schroetter, whom R. is now visiting and likes very much. So, at first sight, do I.

Look in on C.R.A. and tell him that I am very dissatisfied at the slow progress we are making with post-war decisions. He says he agrees and shows some signs of irritation with the P.M.,

/who

-3-

who, he says, "always closes everything down". I speak to C.R.A. about A.E.'s War Cab. paper on the Four-Power Plan (on which G.J. had asked me to excite the interest of C.R.A.) and he says he is sure that the lines suggested are right and that we ought to be talking much more in detail both to the Americans and the Russians. I say I hope he will say this in the War Cab. I add that the present procedure, whereby a large committee of officials, presided over by Hurst, sits on all projects, is not at all satisfactory, and I have been trying to break through this in the case both of Reparations, etc., and of Commercial Union. C.R.A. is in on the latter, but I am interested to notice that, on the former, he says that he would take away all machine tools from Germany and distribute them among her victims, Poles, Czechs, Russians, etc. He asks me to put down on paper any ideas which I may have for improving the efficiency of our post-war planning. But the real trouble is not so much with machinery as with persons.

Little J.W. and I dine with Ivor Thomas and his wife and brother-in-law, a bright little man called Cooke who is at the Bar, Junior Treasury Counsel, and more recently at Fuel and Power. J.W. very hot against Lord Latham of Larger London. The latter, he says, is beavering away, while others are doing useful war work, planning to buy up and cover with housing estates large additional tracts of the Home Counties at a distance of 17 to 20 miles from Charing Cross. Lord L. just doesn't accept the view that London is quite large enough. He has a picture of a vaster territory, over whose enlarged organ of Local Government he will himself preside.

18. 11. 42

P.L. to see me on Repts. etc. in preparation for the first meeting of the Committee to be held this afternoon. I have agreed to this body being called the Committee of Reparations and Economic Security, henceforth to be called C.R.E.S. Meade cannot be there to-day, since he is meeting his wife and family returning after two years in Canada. I tell P.L. that I feel so strongly on the matters to be discussed at C.R.E.S. that, in certain circumstances, though I am not by nature a Resigning Robert, I might feel moved to take a very strong line. My mind, I say, is quite clear that the power of Germany to prepare and make war must be greatly weakened, and that this is both a British interest, a European interest, and, indeed, an interest of all humanity. Neither Italy nor Japan would have given any serious trouble had Germany not been there to lead. P.L. says that he is in complete agreement with my view, but doubts

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whether monetary reparations would either be a policy politically able to be maintained over any long period, and also whether it would not do us damage through reaction on our exports. I say that I regard all these details as quite debateable and hope the C.R.E.S. will go into them fully.

Sir W.Moberley to see me, with Pares, who is doing very well now, to discuss the Advisory Committee of publishers, over which Sir W.M. has agreed to preside. Agreeable and quick at the uptake. He has been connected with nearly every University in the country - Oxford, Birmingham, Aberdeen, Exeter, Manchester - and now is Chairman of the University Grants Committee.

DIARY18. 11. 42*Wrote Leith-Ross, Rivin Paper*

Confer with A.O., G.L.W. and R.P. on man power. The big new squeeze by the Ministry of Labour will come soon. R.P. has been in conference with Norman Brook, and the latter has produced a rough sketch which is not at all too bad from our point of view, especially as regards clothing, from which I had feared that greater subtractions would be demanded. One of the big lumps to be surrendered is, quite rightly, distribution, and I shall be very glad to see the big shops drained of their labour supply, so that we may close more of them.

Liesching
This afternoon the first meeting of C.R.E.S. is held. I tell P.L. to come and report to me immediately it is over, and G.J. dines with me later. So I get two versions, which happen quite to agree. I want these two to get together, and I think they will.

P.L. says that the discussion to-day was nearly all on procedure, and that he and others urged that they should begin by considering broad questions of "Economic Security" before "Reparations". This seems to have been more or less agreed. Keynes, towards the end, "showed signs of putting on his old racing colours", declaring that we should consider nothing except British interests, and that any payment of reparations by or to anyone could not fail to damage us. He had also suggested that we should consider whether payments for "relief" should be made by the Germans. P.L., G.J. and others had thought that this was not the sort of question that should be given a high priority in their discussions. P.L. said that he thought Keynes had raised this in the hope of getting Leith-Ross on to the Committee. Probably true. I can see that we are going to have the sort of trouble I anticipated, but I think there are enough good men on the Committee to get through it. Robbins, apparently, said that he intended to put in a paper on his own. I think that this should be the right sort of stuff. (G.J. tells me that R.P. while speaking very highly of me - as he damned well ought to, seeing that it is only through my efforts that he became a Professor - thinks that I regard things too much from a political point of view.) C.R.E.S. is to meet at least once a week, and often if required.

/G.J.

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G.J. doesn't add much to this account, and we go on to discuss other things. A.E.'s War Cab. paper on the Four-Power Plan, on which I have not yet written to him, was to have been taken, at A.E.'s request, to-day, and A.E. had been down to Chequers to discuss this and other things with the P.M. But now the P.M. is very much occupied and wants it postponed, suggesting that A.E. should talk to Smuts about it. The P.M.'s general line has lately been that we must, of course, disarm the Germans completely, and then we shall be all right. He doesn't like the idea of entering into commitments in Europe, even though the Norwegians and others are asking us to take air bases on their territory. He is also reported to have said, in reply to a question as to the role of Russia, that Russia should be counted as Asia, a non-European world. It is thought that K.W. and Cherwell are egging him on against closer relations with the Russians, and that recent victories have made him less, rather than more, disposed to think in concrete terms of post-war plans. A.E. is said to be getting rather desperate about all this and, it is thought, would welcome some sympathy and support from me. I tell G.J. of my not unsatisfactory words with C.R.A. yesterday, and later to-night dictated a letter to A.E. (copy attached) which will give him an opportunity of pursuing the matter with me if he really wants to. I think in some moods he does, but not in all.

I say that we really must get a better mechanism for considering post-war plans than the Hurst Committee. G.J. says that, to his astonishment, Sam Courtauld has fallen in love with Hurst, who, on his part, has told S.C. that we shall never get anywhere with Jowitt. He was always disloyal to his Ministers, but G.J. and I agree that it is rather shocking that S.C. should think well of such a man. We mention Cripps' recent speeches, and I say that he told me, with some pride, that "every word of what I said was agreed with the Foreign Office". G.J. says that the proposed draft came to him with a Minute on it by some other official, saying "Will all this do any good?", and that he wrote "harm" above "good" and bracketed the two questions. So it was let through!

19. 11. 42

B. Jammer²² to see me on the Sherman case. I tell him to go and talk to Stoker Edwards.

I give P.L. some indications of what G.J. said to me last night, and also a copy of my letter to A.E. I send for him
/primarily

primarily because G.J. yesterday told me that P.L. is representing me on the Law Committee, which is considering various post-war problems.

The Poles are giving a lunch to the P.M. and some other of his Ministers - A.E., E.B., the three Service Ministers, myself and Selborne - with W.Strang also in attendance, looking rather out of it. The rest are Poles. When the P.M. comes in, Sikorski makes a formal speech to him in Polish, translated by Raczynski, we all standing stiffly, thanking him for his great efforts for Poland and congratulating him upon our recent successes. It takes rather too long. The P.M., in a very short reply, says that they may take it that "North Africa will be used not as a sofa but as a spring-board." He says a few appropriate words about the past, present and future of the Poles.

Introduce C.W. as the new Chairman of our Joint Advisory Committee, T.U.C. and B.E.C., on Clothes Rationing. He will do this sort of thing quite well.

Maybe
C.M. looks in to see me for a short while, having just missed North Africa as he just missed Dieppe. He looks very fit and happy and distinguished himself by swimming across a pond in Richmond Park with his braves last week under the eyes of General Paget, who, being distantly related, thereupon asked him to lunch.

Sir Ernest Pooley to dine at Josefs. He enjoyed himself very much, particularly the little bits of inner history which I let loose from time to time. He is 66. One would not have thought it. He is intelligent and well disposed.

20. 11. 42

A most vexatious incident over excavators for Turkey. Stokes has been bothering on about this for weeks, really aiming, I think, at getting all four for his firm, whereas the present intention is that he and Rustons are to have two each. Lately he has been writing and telegraphing almost daily, and has now caught me out as having been "again misinformed" by my officials, the orders not yet having been placed, though I had told him that they had. The official responsible here, Tout, makes, not for the first time, a deplorable impression upon me. First, he got his facts all wrong; second, he has taken no effective action with the U.K.C.C., who misled him, either to tick them off for having

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done so or to speed them up to get the orders placed by the Turks. He tries to tell me that we must be very careful what we say to the U.K.C.C. I know too much about them, and their dependence on the Government, and their role as a British trade agency, and the incompetence of many of their local representatives, to be taken in by this sort of excuse. But for my efforts at M.E.W., they would not have had any funds at all. Finally, he produces a draft, which he thinks that I might send to Stokes, in which I am invited to say, not only that I have been misinformed - and this without either apology or explanation - but to add that "the situation from your point of view remains plastic". This really is the last straw! To have not only an incompetent, but a quite illiterate, don in charge of this is too much to be borne! Later in the day A.O., to whom I suggest that Tout should be given away to some other Department, says that he has done quite well when out of my sight. On the other hand, he has slipped down badly at least three times in matters which have come to my notice. I give warning that, though I won't press for him to be got rid of now, I will return to this theme with redoubled vigour if he does it again. A letter goes to the U.K.C.C. carrying a definite rebuke.

At L.P.'s Cttee. there is argument as to whether Jehova's Witnesses should be denied their paper supply. The Home Office are against such action, but little Mr Cooper, whom one seldom sees these days, thinks H.M.'s arguments all bosh, and I am inclined to agree with him. It is sheer pitiful impudence to say that there is no effective means of preventing the waste and misuse in such cases of this scarce material. Finally it is agreed that O.Peake should collect once more the committee of officials who made the plan for books, and see whether something cannot be done for other forms of printed matter, so as, at the very least, faintly to discourage Jehova's Witnesses.

Mrs P. gives a lunch for Poles plus younger Labour M.P.s. It is a great success, most of the younger M.P.s present never having seen a Pole before. Many of the latter acquit themselves quite well, and Sikorski holds court at one end of the table and has brought to him, one by one, the various younger members of our Party, most of whom are noticeably elevated.

DIARY21. to 22. 11. 42.*(1 kind of mi operation)*

Two full moons and very still.

On Sunday night (22nd) Cabinet changes are announced on the air. H.M. succeeds Cripps in the War Cab. and the latter drops down to M.A.P., thus becoming a lodger downstairs in my own building. This hole is made by the appointment of Llewellyn to Washington. Cranborne is to be L.P.S., and Oliver Stanley returns to the Govt. as Colonial Secretary. A.E. is to lead the H. of C.

I write at once to H.M. "Congratulations! The War Cab. is strengthened." Next morning the D.H. begins its leader with these same last five words. It is, indeed, a great improvement. Nearly all Cripps' "mystique" is now gone, and he has missed all his chances - never really very good - of resigning with credit. He has, I think, been very skilfully played by the P.M. He may, of course, be quite good at M.A.P., but seldom has anyone's political stock, having been so outrageously and unjustifiably over-valued, fallen so fast and so far. I add in my letter to H.M. that I would like soon to have a meeting and a talk, and I write also to Ellen summarising my letter to H.M.

23. 11. 42

J.W. and the two Nevisons dine with me at the Etoile. They are quite a useful link with the N.W.

24. 11. 42

P.L. and Meade for a preliminary talk on "C.R.E.S. They show me a paper by Robbins, which, on the whole, I like. It contains positive proposals for the repair of damage by the Germans after the war, while recognising that most of the benefit of this will go to others and not to us. Much is made in this paper of the argument that, if we assume large monetary reparation payments by Germany, of which only a very small fraction comes to us, the

effect

effect on our terms of trade will be bad, for German exports being very like ours, the tendency will be to push down our export prices. I ask Meade what would happen if Germany, instead of increasing exports, reduced imports. He was not ready with an answer. I decide to see Robbins, after a long and deliberate interval, and seek to line him up with other members of the Cttee. who are, on the whole, of my mind.

To-day I say farewell to Clay, who is going to Washington quite soon. The story that he had a great deal of important unfinished work here turns out to be untrue. Seeing him this afternoon, immediately after Meade, I rejoice at the exchange.

Labour Ministers jointly give a reception at Admiralty House to members of the three Executives and principal officials. A very jovial party, which I think does good. Lawther to-day is holding forth, almost in unctuous tones, about the splendid work which E.B. and I did on behalf of the Miners when we set up the new W.P. organisation. I say that I would like him to repeat all this publicly!

Not so
 F.N. dines with me at the Lansdowne. He looks reasonably fit and has a very interesting and not very responsible job sitting near the centre of things in the Air Ministry and seeing all the most exciting telegrams, but not having to take any real decisions. He says that C.H. has been a failure as his successor; also that G.J. was much hurt because I did not take him with me - I am pretty sure that this is not true, since I discussed all this quite frankly with G.J. at the time and neither he nor I contemplated that he would fall out so quick with my successor. As to this, F.N. says that they never got on from the first moment, but were like two cats arching their backs against one another. He repeats that G.J. makes himself most unpopular by his manner, and doesn't know it. He thinks that the only person who could really explain this to him would be his wife. He says that, when I left, G.J. was like "a sheep without a shepherd." He thinks that Operations in North Africa have been going even better than is commonly realised.

Humble
25. 11. 42

Labour Party N.E. in the morning. Long and yambling discussion of a silly little motion by Laski that the N.E. should

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seek an interview with the P.M. on the "higher direction of policy". This meets with little favour. It is pointed out that there is to be a meeting with Jowitt on December 9th, and it is thought by some that there might thereafter be a meeting with Lab. War Cab. Mins. All this, apparently, in order to ascertain what "decisions" have been taken by the Govt. It is feared by Laski and others that decisions favourable to the point of view of the 1922 Cttee. have already been taken. At a certain point I intervene to say that, though I don't intend to make any sensational revelations this morning, they may take it that the real danger is not that decisions favourable to the 1922 Cttee. will be taken, but that no decisions will ever be taken at all. Ministers, I tell them, constantly obstruct one another from taking decisions, and that I am only really happy when I am free to act in a Departmental field not subject to interference by my colleagues. But, passing to the counter-attack, I tell them that equally dangerous is the prolonged indecision of the Labour Party ~~Committees~~ itself. The Beveridge Report to be published in a day or two is, I understand, to be referred, in the first instance, to four sub-Committees, representing T.U.C., the Co-op., our own N.E., and the Parliamentary Party. Each of these sub-committees, I gather the N.C.L. have decided, is to meet separately and to report separately to its parent body. These parent bodies having separately considered the sub-committees' reports, a meeting of the N.C.L. is then to be called to see whether any decisions can be agreed. This, I bluntly say, is fantastic. When I look around at our litter of committees, I say to myself "Never was so little decided by so many." The "Central Reconstruction Committee", presided over by Shinbad, has produced no decisions for months. Do we yet know whether they are in favour of the Uthwatt Report? No. We must buck up our own processes if Labour Ministers within the Govt. are really to be helped along. All this is taken pretty well, and Morgan Phillips, in particular, nods much approval from a corner. He has been suffering under the indecisive verbosity of Shinbad.

Robbins to see me, slightly uncertain at the beginning of our relationships, but after a while we settle down to discuss C.R.E.S., I having told him that the issues raised here are, in my view, so important that I would be prepared to go great distances and run great risks to get my way. I add, knowing that he has been saying to G.L. and probably to others that I am inclined to be "too political", that there are just a few questions on which I am prepared to take this line, though I regard a great many others as suitable for merely tactical treatment. I tell him that, on the whole, I agree with the line of his paper.

/Leith-Ross

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Leith-Ross gives me an account of Relief as it now stands. The Americans have moved quickly forward by the President's appointment of Lehman, who is obviously designed to be the future Director General of the organisation, to organise American participation in the arrangements. L.R. had a talk last week with Maisky, following A.E. telling the latter what we intended - this in pursuance of the War Cab. decision. Maisky was full of the most ridiculous suspicions, e.g., that the Relief Organisation might be intended to be supra-Governmental and might, e.g., distribute food in Russia, as Hoover did last time, without any reference to the local authorities, and that there was some sinister intention in a harmless phrase about the Organisation providing for the re-settlement of "exiles and prisoners of war". He wished to be assured that it was not intended to send back White Russians into Soviet territory against the will of the Soviet Government. There is much advantage in getting down to details with the Russians, partly because it will give them confidence in our good faith, and partly because it will keep us mindful of their state of mind.

I take L.R. on to dine with J.W. and H.G. - a M.E.W. reunion. L.R. tells amusing stories of his early days as junior Private Secretary at No.10. when Asquith was P.M. in 1910. There were no Cabinet Minutes and no officials ever attended. The only records were the letters written after each Cabinet by the P.M. to the King in his own hand, giving an account of what had passed. And these letters were taken away by each P.M. when he resigned. If a Minister wanted to raise any question in the Cabinet, he just rang up the P.M. beforehand. He then said his little piece in Cabinet, no notice having been given to his colleagues and no papers having been circulated, and generally was told that he could do what he wanted. Then it never came back to the Cabinet again. Evidently this method, though hopelessly "unbusinesslike" and casual, led to much less interference by Ministers in each other's work, and far less impediment to quick decisions. L.G. had gone to the other extreme when he organised the Cabinet Secretariat under Hankey, and there had been, since then, a vast increase in all the apparatus. L.R. said that L.G. had frequently had a number of officials in Cabinet when matters which they were dealing with in their Departments were being discussed, and it was quite usual for officials, rather than Ministers in the first instance, to be called upon to give explanation. In this respect we had now swung back to a far more Ministerial arrangement, since neither in the War Cab. - except for Chiefs or Staff and Secretaries - nor in the L.P.'s Cttee. - again

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except for Secretaries - were the officials admitted. In the latter part of L.R.'s service at No.10, there was one lady typist. The proposal to extend this practice throughout Whitehall had met with great opposition. The Treasury had been inclined to favour it, as a means of economy, and replacement of male by female labour. The Admiralty had thus addressed the Treasury -

"Their Lordships cannot conceal their preference for boys, although they are prepared, in this case and with great reluctance, to experiment with girls."

I cannot date this exactly, but it must have been when L.R. was a junior at the Treasury, before he went to No.10.

To-day in the House 95 members voted against the Govt. on the issue of equal compensation for war injuries for men and women, and this after a Select Committee had been offered and most conciliatory speeches made by C.R.A. and Womersley. For the Govt. there voted 229. The minority included 39 Tories and 35 Labour, the rest being oddments. It would have been a bore if there had been more Labour than Tory in this lobby. As it is, I get the impression that there has been a good deal of stickiness in the Govt. handling of this matter, and too great fear of "repercussions".

26. 11. 42

I say a few words - a very rare proceeding on my part - at the Party Meeting. . This was supposed to be about Reconstruction, with special reference to next week's debate. Jowitt sat silent through the meeting, but I made a few points at the end on matters relating to the B. of T. - notably post-war relief for Europe, based on collaboration between ourselves, the U.S. and Russia; ~~on~~ the future of distressed areas, and the control of the location of industry. I ask members to assist in the debate by making positive and practical suggestions. I am afraid the great majority of my hearers are mentally and emotionally incapable of such a feat.

In the afternoon, deputation on Purchase Tax from the N.C.L. I am able to tell them quite a good and truthful tale; I was not in the Government when it was first decided to impose P.T.; I was not at the B. of T. when it was imposed, or I should have had something to say against it; when I arrived here P.T. applied to 15% of the expenditure of an average working-class family, as shown by Ministry of Labour figures for 1937/38; of

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this 15% I got rid of 9.5% within two months of my arrival here, ~~of the remaining 5.5%~~ by pressing K.W., pretty hard, and in the end successfully, to un-tax utility furniture and footwear; of the remaining 5.5% I have just got rid of another 1% by again pressing him to remit the tax on utility furniture, though I don't want this announced till next Tuesday, when Mrs Adamson has an arranged P.Q. to me on the subject; this leaves only 4.5%, which cannot be regarded as a very large residue, though personally I should be glad to see it go from other utility products, in which event the P.T. would become merely a luxury tax with which no sensible person could quarrel. The deputation receive all this pretty well, except for that dreary old bore Prater, who grizzles on about the margins in my price orders. I tell him that most complaints reaching me are that these are too high. I then recite, somewhat to his annoyance, the list of Co-operative advisers who surround me: (1) Palmer is a member of my C.P.R.C., and so is Mrs Newman, and so is Hallsworth, and I make no order except on their advice, and always look twice at orders to see whether the margins are not too high rather than too low; (2) Fulker is constantly in touch with me, has been consulted on most of these margins, has never said that any of them are too high, but has once or twice suggested that they are too low; (3) Edwards has been appointed by me as one of my Business Members (Prater had complained that the Co-ops were not represented on the old Industrial and Export Council, which I explained I had more or less wound up) and has a room at the Board and constant access to me. Prater, of course, thinks that he ought to have some official position. He bores on until I have to close the meeting and go away to receive, jointly with K.W. at the Treasury, a T.U.C. deputation on the Kennet Committee. They wish the Bank Officers' Guild and the Unions catering for Insurance Workers to be represented on the committees to be set up to advise how to squeeze more labour out of Banks and Insurance Offices. Citrine, a whale among minnows, introduces this deputation. I make it pretty clear that I am in favour of their claim and tell K.W. afterwards that we really must concede it. I could concede it myself on General Insurance, but think it better that we should all keep in line, and he, therefore, will first tackle the Banks, speaking, to begin with, to that old scoundrel M. Norman.

Dine at Euston Hotel, where another of the periodical farewell parties to John Marchbanks is being given. I am the only Minister present. Citrine, Greenwood, Burroughs (a good man who

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has now developed an affectionate regard for me) and Benstead, J.M.'s successor, are the only others not on the Companies' staffs. Derbyshire is in the Chair. A very friendly evening, in the course of which too many people, including myself, make speeches.

27. 11. 42

Accompanied by Moberly and Pares, I have my first official meeting with the Publishers. Three of these come, Harrap (a rather too talkative and not very pleasant little man), Kingsford of the C.U.Press, and Faber (who is said to be the real string-puller). They are slightly suspicious, but on the whole the talk goes pretty well. I hint at the possibility, which they don't like, of increasing the special allocation of paper for books, which is administered by a Publishers' Committee over which I have appointed Moberly to preside, at the expense of the general allocation. They think that this may lead in the direction of "censorship". They think that perhaps it would be best to have a stronger committee of Publishers, over which Moberly would still preside, keeping the present committee as a sub-committee, over which also he would preside. I invite them to put up suggestions on this.

To W.L. in the evening, feeling rather tired and with the beginnings of a chill in the tummy.

DIARY28. to 30. 11. 42.

At W.L. It now gets dark very early, and there is a dankness in the air and in the garden. I take a moderate amount of exercise, but return to London on the 30th still with a tummy chill.

See Willie Whiteley, who is doing his job pretty well, and infinitely better than that old fool Charles Edwards, who never went to the office at No. 11 Downing Street at all! W.W. says that conversations have been going on about the Speakership. It has been thought, till Gwilym L.G. went to M.F.P., that he would be the best successor. Mrs Carey Evans, old L.G.'s daughter, has been saying that Gwilym is very "uneasy" at M.F.P., and that the old man has been bleating that he would like to see his son in the Speaker's Chair before he dies, and adding that Shinwell (!) would make an admirable M.F.P. W.W. has warned C.R.A. to watch out on this, and has told him that such an appointment would meet the most furious opposition on the part of many people, including, in particular, the Miners M.P.s. I say I don't think it is conceivable that such an appointment could be seriously considered. Of other candidates, W.S. Morrison and Crookshank, he says, have been spoken of, "but the P.M. won't look at either of them." W.W. thinks that Crookshank has had rather a raw deal. I don't know why he or we should be solicitous about this, though, in fact, he would make not at all a bad M.F.P. W.W. says that they were at one time pressing the claims of Him Milner for Deputy Speaker, but it has now come to light that he is mixed up, as a Solicitor, with some very unsavoury clients. He was involved in a minor degree, it seems, in the Czech scandal which brought down Boothby. W.W., therefore, thinks that George Oliver should have one or other of the two junior Chairs. I say that he would do quite well, provided he is not too long-winded. W.W. adds, the talk turning to Lawther, that the latter paid a tribute, which was very well received, to Bevin and myself by name at the mass meeting of miners addressed by the P.M., for the work we have done over the Mines Reorganisation scheme.

After this interview I lie low, and stay in, washing out all other engagements.

1. 12. 42

Chill on the tummy having developed violent and disagreeable features during the night, I say in bed and - an even rarer

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proceeding than speaking at a Party Meeting - am visited by a doctor. They collect a man named Macdonagh, who turns out to be the cousin of the deceased General who was a member of my C.P.R.C. He also attends McGowan. He gives me what is called "a very thorough examination", from which, it appears, I emerge with reasonable credit! He does various ingenious things, including giving me an injection to stop my principal inconvenience, and carries away a sample of my blood to analyse. He is an odd chap, with a streak of crankiness, I think, who says that he analyses the blood, etc., of hundreds of thousands of human beings and animals every year, and is thereby enabled to foretell the approach of epidemics. Thus he has ascertained that in February and March of next year there will be a very bad influenza epidemic, and an even worse one in 1945/46. These things, he says, go in cycles and are quite independent of wars. The catastrophic epidemic of influenza of 1919 would have happened independently of the last war. He pulls rather a long face at me in the morning, but comes again in the evening very much brighter, having played about with my blood in the interval! He agrees that to-morrow I may resume normal activities. An occasional day in bed is probably a good move.

2. 12. 42*in production*

Luton hats. Preliminary meeting in the morning at which Garro Jones is present on behalf of the M.P., and also an ugly but probably efficient, though disagreeable, woman from the Ministry of Labour. The whole thing has been a most frightful muddle, and I am clear that we must look again at the inter-departmental arrangements. The Luton agitation has now been raging since last Thursday. They have kept up their publicity very well. It has all been based on a false story that it has been intended to uproot the industry from Luton and transfer it to the North-East coast. This rumour was fed by (1) a slightly injudicious speech of Sir T. Barlow - whom, however, I value highly and will not repudiate - (2) by manoeuvres of the M.P., to which it seems the M.S. are now opposed, to transfer one particular hat firm from Luton to Glasgow, (3) by an injudicious speech of welcome in advance to this firm by Pat Dollan, on the assumption that the move was permanent, and (4) by a very stupid letter from Lord Ridley to Sir Thomas Keens - who is a very bad type of hard-faced, Nonconformist, capitalist humbug, an ex-Liberal M.P. - saying that it would be admirable if a hat-making industry were permanently to set up on

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the Team Valley Estate. I have deliberately held my fire, since last Friday, when it was arranged that I should see the deputation to-day. E.B. sends me this morning an excited letter, evidently dictated in a hurry and with no real knowledge of the facts, urging that the claims of Luton should be "firmly resisted" and that no "concession" should be made to them without reference to J.A., who is co-ordinating man-power policy for the Cabinet. I arrange, in advance of this afternoon's deputation, a press statement which I shall give out at the end of the meeting.

I have an audience of His Majesty, at the start of which, I having said that I am having a bit of fuss over Luton hats, he says "I gather you are moving them to Newcastle". This shows how false ideas spread everywhere! He is interested in various aspects of the work of the B.T., though he doesn't think that utility suits really save any material. I am to send him a copy of the booklet on Utility Furniture. He finds it more and more difficult to purchase suitable presents for people, e.g., silver boxes, or even silver cigarette cases, and he thinks that the prices of these have gone up very high, by more than 300% since before the war, partly, he supposes, due to Purchase Tax - I must put him in touch with Mr Prater - but partly because the shopkeepers add up their accounts wrong, so as to give themselves, until detected, a considerable advantage! He thinks Americans are inclined to be troublesome and to take things too much into their own hands, e.g., in North Africa.

Lunch with McGowan, who is accompanied by Melchett, Nicholson (whom I have recommended for a K.) and Coates, who shows disturbing evidence of being an appeaser of Germany after the war. They ask about reparations, etc., and I tell them, in confidence, the position of the official inter-departmental committee. They say that this sounds a strong team, but they think some industrial scientists should be on it. I say I don't want to widen the field any more, but undertake that, if they will send me the name of one good industrial scientist, I will put him in touch with P.L. I also add that, since I have asked M. to advise me on this whole matter, it would be quite easy for him to constitute, unofficially, a committee which can make recommendations to be transmitted to me. I say that I intend to keep a close eye on C.R.E.S., and that I start from the proposition that Germany's position in Europe must be weakened, relatively to her neighbours, after the war. All except Coates applaud this. But I think they all feel that large monetary reparations would be to our disadvantage, and accept the view, which I stated to them as having been put forward by several of my advisers, that, since we shall only get a small part of any

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such payments, we shall lose more indirectly through the lowering of our export prices than we shall gain directly.

From 3 to 5 p.m. with the Luton Deputation. I am "supported" by Waterhouse, Garro Jones, Barlow, Warter and several other officials. The Deputation, introduced by Burgin, consists of some two dozen persons, representing the Town Council, the Bedfordshire County Council, the Trades Council, the Hat Manufacturers' Association, the Hatters' Union, the engineering trades, and a number of others. Burgin (who tried to see me alone before the Deputation, but I refused, since he has had plenty of opportunities of seeking me out since last week but has not used them, having preferred to conduct an outside agitation), is very saponacious, and indicates five members of the deputation as about to speak. I say that this will be admirable, but that first I would like to make a few preliminary observations. I then say that evidently there has been some misunderstanding, because the Board of Trade had not, in fact, ever made a proposal to shift the hat industry out of Luton, and this is not intended. But there is a war on and, in this war, arms are more important than hats, as I am sure they will all agree. Therefore, it will be necessary for them to turn over all possible labour from hats to arms, though the few who remain, being untransferable, will be able to go on making hats in Luton, so far as the shortened supply of materials permits. I congratulate them on their publicity, hope that what I have said may have made some parts of their speeches unnecessary, and invite them to proceed. They do, reading out their prepared speeches and omitting not one word, handing in petitions and documents and charts and histories of Luton, and taking their full time. All are quite unobjectionable, except Sir Thomas Keens, who is an ex-Liberal M.P. and a typical hard-faced, Nonconformist, capitalist humbug. The sort of man, I said to Sir T. Barlow afterwards, who would be delighted to put his daughter on the streets for having had an adventure with a boy friend. The sort of man, said Sir T.B. to me, who has a most repulsive kind of religion which he keeps in a box, only to be opened on Sundays. I have a few cracks with Sir T.K., telling him at one point that he is a master of invectives and has practice, as an ex-M.P., at keeping just within the rules of order. At another point I tell him not to talk nonsense. What it all ends up with is an agreement that the next step must be a consultation between my officials and representatives of the industry. I explain that this afternoon's deputation is too representative to discuss details, since it includes two Local Authorities, other industries, etc. I then read them a short statement which I myself

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propose to give the press, and it is agreed that they may make what further statement they like, though I express a hope that it will be broadly in accord with my own. As I expected, the deputation, or rather Sir T.K., bases himself on Barlow's speech, the Headgear Directions Order, (both of these referring to transfer of the industry), Pat Dollan's welcome to Clydeside, and Ridley's letter to Keens written on Ministry of Production notepaper. Wishing not to let Barlow down, I make no reply to the deputation on any of these vulnerable points except the last. But, having invited Keens to hand me Ridley's letter, I hand it back just before they go, ask the shorthand writer to drop her pencil, and say "Lord Ridley was speaking out of his turn and had no authority whatever to say what he did."

This has gone as well as could be hoped, but it is not a good affair.

Thorpe and H.G. to see me on the appointment of new members of Shops Licensing Committees. Four of the Chairmen are now agreeable to having one representative of the retail traders and one of the Distributive Unions added for licensing purposes. The others are still, in varying degrees, hostile. I, therefore, decide that I will make appointments in these four easy ones, and later consider extending this beginning. Thorpe, of course, has handled the thing very skilfully.

Dine with Hyndley and H.G. Quite like old days when I was Minister for Coal. I think I am really being canvassed to agree to the recommendations of the Interdepartmental Committee proposing the increase of 1/- a ton, as against the 1/9 originally put up by M.F.P. H.G., who represented me on the Committee, has done quite well in getting off 9d. out of 1/9. H. says that the output went down sharply the week after the Prime Minister addressed the miners! Since then, it has come up again, and is now running between 4.1 and 4.2 (00,000) per week. In the summer, even without holidays, it was often down to 3.8 or 3.9. The mild winter so far has been a great piece of luck, and so has the absence of air attacks, so that transport has not been interfered with at all. We are hoping to get through the winter without rationing, though what may come next spring remains to be seen. The arguments that the introduction of rationing would mean the use of considerable man power is of increasing importance, as man power gets shorter and shorter. H. says that the P.M. was very nervous when he arrived at the Central Hall to address the miners. He apparently expected some hostile interjections about the Second Front. He took a little while to get into his stride, but he had a tremendous

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good reception all through, being enthusiastically applauded both at the beginning, at the end, and at intervals all through. He began: "War is fought with steel, and steel is made from coal." Half way through he spoke of our bombing attacks on Germany and Italy, and said we were repaying what the enemy had done to us "with interest, with compound interest, and soon they will get a bonus." This was received with a roar of delighted approval. He ended with a long passage on what men and women would be able to say they had done for victory when all was over. "Some will say 'I was a pilot in the Battle of Britain'; others will say 'I bombed the enemy's submarines'; others will say 'I was with the Army at El Alamein'; others will say 'I was in the Merchant Navy and brought the ships safely home'; others will say 'I made the shells'; and you will say 'I cut the coal'." H.'s only criticism was that he should have said 'won' and not 'cut', for the latter might seem, to a pedantic critic, to limit the appeal to workers at the coal face. But it was very well taken, and Lawther made an excellent speech, proposing a vote of thanks. Evan Williams, on the other hand, who seconded him, was too long and very nearly got the bird from the audience. H. thinks that his present Minister listens to too many people before making up his mind, particularly on appointments. Young is not very easy in harness with civil servants. The National Board is not yet set up - after six months! - but the rest of the machinery is working pretty well.

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3. 12. 42

Cadogan to see me, to try to settle the point in the W.P. on the Foreign Service where I want to insert a sentence giving the B. of T., as well as the D.O.T., a place on the Promotions Board when the higher appointments in the Commercial Diplomatic Service are being considered, and providing that such appointments shall be made "by the Foreign Secretary in agreement with the President of the Board of Trade". He says the F.S. could not agree to my last words, and suggests that this sentence should be dropped out, and that it should be said that the B. of T. would be represented "through the D.O.T." on the P.B. I say that this won't do at all. Officials of the D.O.T. are to officials of the B.T. as Consuls are to Diplomats! and that the position of the P.B.T., in relation to such appointments, must be safeguarded. This is not a question of A.E. or myself, but of our successors. I end by agreeing to "Before making such appointments, the F.S. shall consult the P.B.T." He says that he will put this up. On my first sentence I make no concession.

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The War Cab. should have taken the W.P. to-day, but now, not only my paper but a litter of others have been put up, by K.W., trying to go back on his agreement of last year, by H.M., arguing that there are "many good administrators" in the Home Civil who should have an opportunity of interchange with the F.S. (as though an "administrator" was all that was wanted in a diplomatic mission!), and by D.C., who argues that the real distinction is, not between the Home and the Foreign Service, but between the worlds of the Atlantic and the Pacific, and that we should tie up this reconstruction with that of the Dominions Office, the Colonial Service, and the India Office, instead of, as this plan seems to him to do, trying "to rebuild one London street at a time". This is sheer nonsense, as though Sir Shenton Thomas, for example, would make our best Ambassador in Tokyo. So, in view of this glut of comment, it is decided that the War Cab. shall make no decision till further study of the W.P. has been made by a committee of Ministers, to be named by the P.M. after consultation with the F.S.

Meet Agnides, now grown very fat and grey, - he was rather a slight, dark Greek years ago at Geneva in their Disarmament Section - who has this morning presented his Letters of Credence as Ambassador. Well disposed, but not impressive.

C.W. answered a P.Q. to-day on Luton. There was no follow-up, though, he said, there was a slight titter in the House.

4. 12. 42

Nelson
Group Captain Grant to see me, at F.N.'s instigation, to express great gratification that I should wish to spend Christmas with the R.A.F. He will make all arrangements and accompany me, probably to the east coast, spending two nights at one Station and a third at another. This will be a good change from Whitehall.

Conference this afternoon with C.W., A.O., Watkinson, Pares, Warter and Barlow, to consider the lessons of Luton. I tell them that if we get a reputation for this kind of thing, it will discredit not only me and C.W., but all of them and the E. of T. itself. The conference with Luton must be very carefully handled, and so must the other outstanding cases, Paint, Furniture, etc., as well as clothing, on which Barlow has made some progress already. We must not close down firms without necessity. This is the method which the M. of L. prefers, since it drives workers to the Employment Exchange, and then they whisk them into the Forces or munitions. But it is becoming politically very inadvisable.

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The M. of L. must be pressed to take responsibility locally. We have not got local staffs, and therefore the man power argument can be used here against E.B., if necessary. Further, there must be better co-ordination with the M. of P. The Location of Industry Committee, under Garro Jones, where Warter, accompanied by Pares, represents me, must be consulted before negotiations for transfer are undertaken with particular firms. Residues must be allowed to die away locally, as at Luton. I will put in a paper to the L.P.'s Cttee. on all this.

Cherwell, who came to see me yesterday, said that he was very glad that I was "standing up for the civilians". He was quite sure that 25% could be cut, both from the stocks and from the current supplies of the Services, both as regards clothing and equipment, and also as regards most sorts of armaments - excluding special cases such as aircraft and tanks - without any damage to the war effort. He did not think that Portal was going quite far enough on this. I said I greatly welcomed his support, and I also gave him copies of my two papers on Reparations and Commercial Union. He seemed to be in favour of my general thesis on both. He is full of suspicion of "the Foreign Office" and of Keith-Ross; the former because "they say we mustn't speak to the Americans unless we have the permission of the Russians", and the latter because he wants to expand "relief" into "reconstruction" and run the whole of post-war Europe. He likes Meade.

G.J. to dine. He has been in the House these last two days on the Reconstruction debate. He thinks A.E. did very well, both in manner and matter. Much of his speech, he thinks, was quite bold. He himself, of course, made the draft, and got in a good deal more than he expected, though some of his more striking passages were cut out. A.E. was warmly congratulated both by Maisky and Raczynski, both by Erskine Hill and Gallacher! Who says there is no wide agreement on post-war policy? A.E. did not consult the P.M. beforehand, but there has been no adverse reaction. Speaking without close reference to his notes, A.E. left out two passages which he had down, first, a second quotation from Stalin's last speech on our common aims - "liberty for all, etc.", and, second, a passage in which small States were warned that, unless they both came together and paid more heed to the views of great States, their "independence" would not amount to much. G.J. thinks the Darlan business is most deplorably dangerous. It has excited the deepest suspicion among the Russians, who say this is the beginning of what they had long foreseen, the Anglo-American-Quisling Front in Europe. Really, it is the work of Murphy, who has been

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intriguing for this in North Africa for a long time, and of that awful Leahy, who planned all this from Vichy, when he was American Ambassador there, and is now one of the President's closest advisers. Eisenhower is an innocent tough guy. He knows nothing of politics, but has been saying that he will do a deal with the Devil himself if that will help to win the war, that "Paris is worth a Mass", etc. There is a great danger that American innocence may land us all in some very deep holes.

I had heard earlier this evening from P.L. of the course of the C.R.E.S., which met this afternoon. Bellairs has put in quite a good paper, though the military were inclined to think that we were precluded by the Atlantic Charter from taking any steps against German industry. G.J. had put this right. He and P.L. both agreed in reporting that Keynes was now in favour of giving all Upper Silesia to Poland. (Yet it was L.G., egged on by Keynes, who prevented this being done when the French and Americans wanted it at Versailles, and had put it in the first draft of the Peace Treaty!) Playfair was objecting this afternoon to certain measures of economic security on the ground that they would "cause resentment" in Germany. The rest seem pretty solid. P.L. had said of Bellairs that he was so modest that "he thinks he is out of his depth when the water is really only up to his ankles." G.J. says that in the F.O. there is opposition to his policy - the Four-Power Plan - from the Wilhelmstrasse, i.e., the Central Department. Here there is still high regard for German greatness, past and future, and for the legend of Bismark. Makins is still away but is returning soon, and little Roberts, his No.2, is anxious to "keep everything all right for dear Roger". Pro-German views are also held by Harrison, now in the C.D. Ronald, on the other hand, is quite sound and, according to G.J., is an admirer of mine "in a rather sombre way."

5. 12. 42

Stay in London this weekend. Visit my dentist and receive Mr Brodzki, who says that the News of the World, for which he now writes, is the most influential of all newspapers, and that I should not too much lose myself in the details of the Board of Trade and Luton hats, but should come out in favour of the Beveridge Report. He does not seem quite to understand the chains of a Minister must drag along.

DIARY6. 12. 42 (Sunday)

Walk through the Parks with Will Henderson, and lunch with him and little Arthur. W.H. is very bitter at not having got one of the recent by-elections. He attributes it wholly to the fact that he offered less money than Bowles at Nuneaton, or Ivor Thomas at Keighly. He feels that his reputation has been damaged by association with Greenwood. He is, as usual, very complimentary to me, and I think is quite sincere, but I doubt whether he carries much weight anywhere just now.

W.H. thinks that any Minister should have the right to appoint his own principal Civil Servant, without reference to anyone outside the Department. I said I thought the right way to put it was that the Minister should get the P.M.'s approval. It should be kept on a Ministerial plane. The P.M., no doubt, would consult someone and would also himself have some knowledge of the persons of Whitehall. The Minister, quite unaided, might be an easy dupe for some designing bureaucrat, or might often so lately have reached his office that he did not know anything about the various candidates. I related certain experiences of my own, and said that here, as elsewhere, a determined Minister with knowledge - I hope I didn't pat myself too hard on the back here - could get his own way. I cited the case of Lees-Smith and Pelham. L.S. got his way, on approaching C.R.A., against Warren Fisher.

Little Arthur is much concerned about his powers and status at the War Office. He thinks that duties should be definitely "delegated". I point out that the S. of S. is responsible to Parliament, and must know what is going on, and relate my own experiences as (1) No.2 to his father, whom I saw every day but who delegated nothing to me except the Boxer Indemnity Bill, I having dodged an attempt by the officials to delegate the negotiations on Russian debts and claims which had been landed on Ponsonby in 1924, (2) with D.Foot at M.E.W., to whom, contrary to the advice of the officials, I delegated nothing, though I let him chase practically every rabbit he put up to me, and hear that he thought himself admirably treated, and (3) with C.W. at the B. of T. whom I frequently make Chairman of Committees, and who sees my engagements and has the right to break in when he chooses. I said it all really depended, not on "constitutional positions", nor paper schemes, but on personal relations between the No.1 Minister and his No.2. I rather took little A. aback by saying that the

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chief purpose of Under-Secretaryships was to provide training facilities, within Government Departments, for future No.1 Ministers, and that no man, therefore, should be made an Under-Secretary unless he had reasonable prospects of being promoted later. Little A. said "Then you do not think we have any real constitutional importance?" I said "No, not much." He is a wooden little chap, but does his best. He said that at the Army Council a few weeks ago he was the only one who gave support to a proposal by the Adjutant General (Ronald Adam) that some candidates for O.C.T.U.s should be chosen by the men in their Unit. The others all thought this would be very "dangerous". But little A., I get the feeling, supported it, not so much because he was convinced on the merits, but because he felt that it was the kind of thing that a Minister drawn from the Labour Party should support.

W.H. in the Park had said how important it was, both to learn to run a Government Department, and in fact to run it, and I had said that my happiest days were those when I saw neither Parliament nor my colleagues, but simply sat in my chair and ran the Board of Trade, or bits of it. I quoted the criticism made of some Frenchman ~~apxxxxxxxstakexaxgreetxspewek~~ that "he was a great orator, but always apt to mistake a great speech for a great deed". And this, I said, was true of many little orators also.

What at the F.O. they call "The Four-Power Plan", in support of which G.J. said he had been working very hard since he went back, is faced by no defensible alternative. Amery, however, put up a paper supposing that both we and the Americans and the Russians should "keep out of Europe", each of us having large enough extra-European estates to administer, and it being desirable that the Germans should have some "outlet" in a sphere natural and appropriate to them. This frightful plan, which found no support in the Cab., G.J. calls "The No-Power Plan", but it is much worse than this. It is the German Victory-through-Defeat Plan.

DIARY7. 12. 42

L.P.Cttee. on Coal. H.G. has been very successful in knocking 9d. off the 1/9 originally proposed by M.F.P. as the permitted increase in the price of coal per ton. We feel we can agree to the 1/- without serious reactions on our controlled prices.

Conference with C.W. and officials on the sequels to Luton. We have issued prompt denials of the press rumours that it was intended to move prams out of Birmingham and gloves out of Worcester. The cases differ, for I want more prams but am prepared for many fewer gloves. Meanwhile, both Birmingham and Worcester are badly congested with arms production. Last October we asked pram makers in Birmingham to consider whether some additional production could not be built up in other parts of the country, thus also saving transport of these most bulky articles. As to gloves, the intention is to strip most of the Worcester factories of nearly all their remaining labour, but to let the residue go on where they are. The only evidence of any intention to move gloves from Worcester was given by a very subordinate woman representative of the Ministry of Labour, who said at a conference, at which my own people were represented, that the M.L. would like to see the industry shifted. She was, however, immediately squashed by all others present.

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Dine this evening with H.M. and E.W., the latter having arranged the party, at the Howard Hotel, where H.M. now seems to stay. We talk pretty frankly about persons in the Party, and I repeat, deliberately, though quite casually in the course of the conversation, that it is not part of my ambition to be the Leader of the Party. I had thought that the conversation might have gone a little further than it did, but it was quite useful that it went even thus far. I suggest to E.W. that we might repeat a party, I taking the initiative and adding J.W. She would like this.

On my return, I spend till after mid-night preparing my paper for L.P.'s Cttee. on Concentration and Transfer of Industry.

As to Darlan, I gather from various sources the following picture. Not only the Russians, who matter most, fear the development of an Angle-American-Quisling Front in Europe, but many

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others are much disturbed. (The "Statesman" has a rather plausible analogy later this week of our relations with Darlan now and of with Kolchak in the last war, but this breaks down, I think, in the quite different situation in France now and in Russia then. It is quite definite that the Americans did this on their own, Eisenhower having to take a quick decision in Algiers, where various Frenchmen were gathered, without much opportunity for reference back. We had originally hoped, and so had the Americans that Giraud would be the man, but, quite apart from his preposterous personal claims, he failed to carry the other leading Frenchmen. To the surprise of many, the motley collection of French Generals at Algiers plumped for Darlan, perhaps because the Generals could not agree to rally behind any one of their own number. Darlan, moreover, was able to represent himself as being in the direct line of authority from the Marshal, who was now deprived by German duress of the power to exercise this authority himself any more. D., however, could do everything "in the name of the Marshal", and all the others, obeying D., were obeying the Marshal, and free from all possibility of blame. De Gaulle, on the other hand, had forfeited his rights by becoming a rebel against the authority of the Marshal, and, in particular, by leaving France without the Marshal's permission. E., faced by the decision of the rest to serve under D., had quickly to decide whether to accept this arrangement. It was necessary to decide very quickly, for military and naval operations were actually taking place, and there was still stiff resistance by the French warships and coastal batteries to the American landings at Casablanca. Many transports, heavily laden with American soldiers and stores, were "lolling about in the Bay" unable to land, and there were signs that the weather on the Atlantic coast might quickly change for the worse, so that, even if French resistance was overcome within a few days, an unopposed landing might, none the less, be difficult. Meanwhile, U-boats, temporarily outwitted, were now rapidly gathering from all directions. D. said that if, having been duly recognised by the Americans, he gave the order, all French resistance to the American landings would cease. He was recognised; he gave the order; and it did cease. This had been worth a very great deal, in time and lives, throughout North Africa. Indeed, some French soldiers who at first had turned their guns against the advancing Anglo-Americans, had, on receipt of Darlan's orders, come over and joined us and turned their guns against the Germans and Italians. As already stated, I deeply suspect the part played in all this by Murphy in North Africa, and by old Leahy back in Washington. But Eisenhower seems to have been just a sensible, realistic soldier, and the public statements by the

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President sound reassuring to all except to Darlan. The latter cannot really regard his position as very secure, and an opportunity may come before long to dislodge him. Meanwhile, it is, of course, possible that he may place us under fresh obligations to keep him on. What would be best would be if there were some good alternative, either military or civilian, both to him and to de Gaulle. The latter now has many supporters among the disgruntled in this country, who used to say what innocents we were to think that he was anything other than a Fascist. Now he is spoken of by these same people as a sort of male Joan of Arc. In truth, he is a most tiresome, egoistical, jealous, and narrow-visioned man. On the other hand, in these last days has come the news that Dakar is ours, Governor Boisson having likewise accepted Darlan's right to give him orders in the name of the Marshal. This is an immense gain, and we have got it without the loss of one life. It was, of course, a very good ruse to make the Germans believe that it was there, and not in Morocco and Algeria, that we intended to make a landing. I am told that all their U-boats scuttled down to that part of the coast, and so were nicely out of the way when our convoys arrived off North and North-West Africa.

8. 12. 42

Sir P.Harris brings a deputation of small furniture makers from East London to see me. He said to me afterwards "They are an awful rabble", but the interview went all right and they were assured that we were already contemplating that a number of them might make Utility furniture, either individually or in groups.

S.Courtauld to see me about his export trade to South America. He is very full of the idea that the Americans will try and do us down all over the world after the war. He was, of course, bitten very hard on his U.S.properties, and this experience is apt to colour his view. He really has not much complaint about the Argentine, where the Americans have suggested that neither we nor they should send in any textiles, the Argentine local industry being sufficient, it is argued, to provide all their own requirements during the war, allowing for a certain cut as compared with peacetime consumption. The Argentines, moreover, are a most unsatisfactory neutral, and not worth

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encouraging. We then speak of other matters, including the possibility of making rayon from home produce. S.C. says that they could supply themselves from a relatively small forest area in Scotland - I think he said 100 sq.miles - but this is a long-distance venture. And others say that you can't pulp home-grown timber. We also speak of the relations of rayon and cotton, and I urge that they should keep together, though rayon should have reasonable recognition and scope.

Dine with E.D., who has now been working for some weeks with C.R.A. The latter, he says, told him at the start that he had no experience in "using assistants". It was therefore left to E.D. to invent his own methods. He looks after all Lord President's Cttee. papers, as well as War Cab. papers which are economic, and hopes later on to deal also with Labour Party papers, though he is doing nothing in this line as yet. He says that C.R.A. is very variable, and often very irritable. Did he show this latter side to his colleagues? I said no, I thought he didn't dare. E.D. says that C.R.A. has many too many committees to attend, and is, he thinks, very much over-worked. He also thinks that he is very conscious of difficulties in the Labour Party.

9. 12. 42.

T.U.C. Deputation to Labour Ministers at No. 11 Downing Street on Trade Disputes Act. The atmosphere is not very good. It appears, though none of us had realised this before, that the G.C.'s "consultations with the Conservative Party" were not, as we had supposed, with influential members of the 1922 Committee, or with such Tory Ministers as R.A.B., but with a small number of persons, quite of the second class, representing the Conservative Associations in the country. Only two of these were M.P.s, namely Headlam and Gwilym Rowlands! Naturally they got nowhere. They then met the "Liberals", including again only one M.P. and five outsiders, led by Comyns Carr. They are only asking now for two changes in the Law, the right of Civil Servants' Associations to affiliate to the T.U.C., and the removal of the prohibition on a Local Authority to make Trade Unionism compulsory on its staff. On this second point there has been some legalism lately which has been helpful from the T.U.C. point of view. It is left ~~what~~ Labour Ministers in the War Cab. shall take up this question again with the P.M., who, it seems, would be quite prepared to agree to the T.U.C. request if there were not serious Conservative opposition

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and try to get things moving. Two suggestions canvassed are (1) a meeting between members of the G.C. and of the 1922 Cttee, so as to win over at any rate a substantial minority of Tory M.P.s, and (2) the appointment of some Committee of Enquiry, if there were reasonable prospects that its position would be such as to give a favourable report, and if the Govt. would be likely to agree in advance to implement it. C.R.A. does not make a very good impression, and one of the G.C. leaders says "If you don't know what is going on, that only shows how little you are consulted, even though you are Deputy Prime Minister."

With J.W. to "Went the Day Well?". Not a very good film, though the idea is promising.

10. 12. 42

Secret Session at which P.M. makes a very frank and, to the majority, pretty convincing statement on Darlan and North Africa.

Lunch with Mrs P. Also present C.R.A. and two Croats, Krnjevic and Bicamic (I think this last name is right). B. is much the more intelligent of the two. He has organised Croat Co-ops and has a realistic view of what they can grow and export. K. is always drearily the same; always grizzling against Serbian Generals, and the heavy military expenditure in Jugo-Slavia before the war, but never a word against German Generals, or a reference to the remarkably successful, even though large, German military expenditure. Neither of these two would particularly like an advance of Russian power to their frontiers, and, indeed, they have only the dimmest picture of post-war Europe, except that there should be no great Armies - and in particular no Serbian Generals - no great agricultural imports from overseas, since this would swamp, they think, their local production, and probably some pretty close approach to an independent Croatia.

Maisky comes to see me, bringing me samples of cloth offered by the T.U.C. which he says are not good enough for the Russians. I gather that the Clothing Committee is going pretty well. He comes, I think, to tell me another thing, namely that he has now got a favourable reply from his Government to the proposal put to him when some of us dined at the Soviet Embassy some while ago, of a British Labour Party delegation to visit Russia. He thinks the visit should be made before the end of the winter, and that the delegation should consist of leading people in the Party who will be able, on their return, to get the N.E. to

agree to whatever they themselves have agreed to in Moscow. He has already told this to H.M. I asked whether he contemplated that Labour Ministers should go. He said that this was a matter for us, but that he very much hoped that some would. I said that I could see a good deal of difficulty here, but that we would have to go into it. I think that in Moscow they have the intention to try to get us to agree to ~~many rather~~ something rather difficult, e.g., either as to peace terms in some detail (as when A.E. met Stalin), or as to the formation of some new International, possibly merging Second and Third, and thus involving our own relations with the British Communists. This will want careful watching. And, in fact, I don't see how Labour Ministers could expect to get the consent of their colleagues to go on such a trip.

I talk to M. a bit about the war, and he says that we have a long way to go before we meet in Berlin, though, he adds, "You have further to go than we have". I say that I myself would much like, for several reasons, to go on the proposed mission, though I think it very unlikely that I shall be able to, but I remind him that I have a very consistent record in regard to Russia, never having said anything rude about them in public - British Communists are quite another story - having, on the contrary, said nice things about them in my book in 1928, having had some share in the resumption of diplomatic relations with them in 1929, having visited their country and praised their planned economy in 1932, having taken the leading part in poking up the Old Umbrella by weekly Questions in Parliament when we were trying to secure the Anglo-Franco-Soviet Pact in 1939, and having refused to visit Finland, and having maintained a firm silence on the subject of the Russo-Finnish war in 1940. I had always wanted, I said, to confront Germany with the choice of peace, or war on two Fronts. He says "Yes, you have a very good record."

11. 12. 42

L.P.'s Cttee. takes my paper on Concentration and Transfer of Industry and E.B.'s rather confused and hurried counter to this. We have little time, since earlier items took too long and there is a War Cab. at 11.30. But, after I had made some opening remarks, and E.B. had followed this with some objections, and O.L. had been relatively friendly to my thesis, J.A. said that he thought there was really no great difference between us, and suggested that a committee of officials should try to prepare an agreed statement. I accept this, and tell Watkinson to do it for

me. Chapman, T.J.'s Under-Secretary, spoke to me afterwards and said that in Scotland they shared my general view. I said that, in that case, the Scottish Office should be represented on the committee. He said that he would take this up. E.B. growled, as we were leaving the meeting, that I should speak to Sir T. Barlow and tell him not to make rude remarks about the staff of the Ministry of Labour to T.U. representatives! There is really a rather disgraceful epidemic of buck-passing among Ministers on all these issues. When, for instance, I mentioned paint this morning, and said that Duncan would agree that this was a case where we must proceed carefully, he said he did agree, but added "We didn't ask for it to be done". In fact, the M. of S. put up all the details for the suggested concentration. I let out a little, but not too much, not desiring, in particular, to upset O.L, about the lack of consultation in the Luton case. My officials afterwards were concerned that we had not got a "decision" so that I could stage a P.Q. next week, or make some statement. But I am inclined to think we have all over-estimated the extent to which the outside world is still remembering this particular headache of ours.

The P.M. has sent a Minute enquiring about repairs to wireless sets. It is very difficult to ferret out the facts from my officials. But at last, after three days, I get enough material for a reply.

R. Edwards to see me. He is still a bit farouche in his relations with the B. of T., other than with me personally. He wants to be in more on Reconstruction. He has not really clicked with Watkinson, nor even seen as much as I had hoped of J.W. But he is a useful talking point for outside, and will, I think, be more use inside later when he learns, though very slowly, his way about.

12. 12. 42.

Question
Before leaving for Birmingham, to address meeting of West ~~Regional~~ Midland Regional Council of Labour (see separate note attached), speak to G.P. about toys. I read in bed this morning in the Daily Express ~~that~~ a loud grizzle about our quota restrictions hindering the supply of toys for Christmas. I said I saw no point at all in inviting another fuss, in Parliament and in the press, about this silly little matter. What was there to be said for my officials sitting tight, at Christmastime, on stocks

of toys already manufactured? One toy before Christmas was judged, by our poor sentimental compatriots, to be worth more than 10 in the New Year. I, therefore, judged that all stocks in wholesalers' hands should now be let out, below a certain price. I told G.P. that I would like an Order signed to-day. He should go into it at once and - on my return to-night at 9 p.m. - either leave me a note saying that the Order had been made, or parade all principal officials who had been making difficulties about such an order, along with himself, in order that we might have a pleasant Saturday night conference about it.

Travelling back from Birmingham, I read in an evening paper that a new Toy Order had that day been made, by the B. of T., releasing from quota restrictions, between now and December 26th, all toys below a certain price in the hands of wholesalers and manufacturers. On my return I found no Private Secretary nor other officials, but a note from G.P. explaining that this Order had been made and put over the B.B.C. on the one o'clock News. They didn't want to spoil their Saturday night off!

13. 12. 42.

Take things lazily, staying in bed till lunch, not going out, and discussing with H.G. at an evening meal next week's P.Q.s on Retail Trade and kindred problems.

Birmingham, 12. 12. 42.

Opening Conference of West Midland Regional Council
of Labour.

Quite a good audience, in which T.U.s and D.L.P.s were well blended. This blend is the best part of our Regional Councils. The T.U.s are, in fact, much less strongly represented than at Annual Conference, but hold tendency to freakishness in check.

Harry Wickham is to be Secretary and Organiser here, and probably Tom Baxter in the new East Midland Region, with H.Q. at Nottingham. Both are extra good and pretty young. Oxfordshire are included in West Midlands, and Lincolnshire in East Midlands, thus breaking into the Home Counties on the one hand, and the old Eastern district on the other. Windle is also at the Conference, which he handles with his customary conciliatory skill. But he is getting a bit fat and past his prime.

Though I had imagined that I was not yet quite fit again, I found that I was in very good form, and thoroughly enjoyed myself. There was no press, and I could speak quite freely. I began by saying that the B. of T. had many troubles and that we had had last week to deny a rumour that all the prams were to be wheeled out of Birmingham. They liked this start. Then, having praised Regional organisation, and having taken a good deal of personal credit for pushing it along, when I was Chairman of the N.E. - in which year we founded R.C.s in South Wales and in the North-West - and later, I spoke to them about (1) the war, and (2) after.

On (1) I said that most of us had only the dimmest realisation of what was happening in Europe, and urged them to have to speak one of our comrades from Poland, or C.S., or Norway. I then read a passage from Stalin's speech of last month, on the 25th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution, describing the horrors being perpetrated by the Germans in occupied Soviet territory. (I tried out at this meeting a new approach, whereby I kept Russian achievements, and recent Russian pronouncements, constantly prominent. In other words, in order to make any point make it through a Russian word or act. While Russian stocks stand so high, especially in the Labour Party, I am sure that this is the best expository method. It worked very well to-day.) How little we suffer here! Why? Because of our own unaided

achievements

-2-

achievements in 1940, through our airmen and seamen. We are entitled still to be very proud of having stood alone then.

In June, 1941, that fool Hitler - someone (in fact, Eden) said to me lately "If there was a German Parliament, and an Opposition, what a wonderful speech one could make on a vote of censure on Hitler's conduct of the war!" - invaded Russia, and that night the Anglo-Soviet alliance was born, for which so many of us had struggled so hard and in vain in years of peace. I then praised the P.M.'s broadcast, boldly made without consultation with colleagues, and quoted Peter Fraser's words, down at Chequers, "That goes for N.Z. as well". I then praised the amazing efficiency of Russian planned economy in wartime, the bringing up from the depths of Siberia and from the Urals of vast quantities of arms, supplies and trained men, a miracle both of production and of transport. I then recalled my visit to Russia in 1932 and my memory of the Red October Factory, turning out tractors then, but always prepared to turn out tanks, because the Russians saw, so much more clearly than we, the German menace even then. I spoke, too, of the Workers' Club in Stalingrad, and how much better than any such in this country, with facilities for everything, from sunbathing on the roof for hundreds of workers at one time, through libraries, lecture halls, concerts, plays, gymnasia, barbers' shops, canteens, to a shooting gallery in which the most favoured target then was a figure of Sir Austen Chamberlain. My audience liked this quite a lot.

Then, in December, 1941, the Japs attacked the U.S., and that day there was born the Anglo-Soviet-American Coalition of which Stalin speaks so often in his speech. The maintenance of this is the key to the future. I spoke then of the Anglo-Soviet Alliance to last for 20 years after the war, and of our recent victories in North Africa, which had put the British Army back into self-esteem. I then told them the story of the General jumping on the bus in front of the queue. "He wouldn't have dared to do that in Birmingham", someone said. I then told them that there was still a long way to go before we and the Americans met the Russians in Berlin, and, to get this over, I said "A very prominent Russian" (it was Maisky, and I meant them to guess this, and I think they did) "said to me a few days ago 'Your Army must meet ours in Berlin, and you have got further to go than we have'".

And so to the substance of my Advance (attached). The only other points I added were that at the B. of T. I was organising

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the supply of clothes to Russia, and of Relief, through Leith-Ross, for liberated lands in Europe. It was a good meeting, and I don't ignore the fact that I shall have furbished up my reputation with a number of D.L.P.s there represented.

DIARY14. 12. 42.

Discuss with British Insurance Association the proposals of the Kennett Cttee. on Manpower. They take very well my intention to appoint a nominee of the T.U.C. to my Advisory Cttee. and - this I thought would be the difficult point, but it wasn't - to associate the Guild of Insurance Officials with representatives of their Bank Unions and of their own Association to discuss arrangements at an earlier stage.

Dine with G.J. to make the acquaintance of Dr Lubin, a clever little Jew who lives in the White House. He is interested in our concentration, rationing, etc. I offer him all facilities to inform himself further at the B. of T. We both try to make him see the importance of keeping the Russians in a good and co-operative mood. He expresses himself, without any lead from us, as being in favour of the transfer of Germans both of East Prussia and Silesia. But he does not like the Poles at all, and I am not sure whether he realises that such a transfer must be made to them. I say that it would, no doubt, be associated with a new eastern frontier of Poland roughly along the Curzon Line, and I add that the most civilized and democratic Poles live in the West, whereas in the East there were enormous Polish estates populated, for the most part, by Ukrainians and White Russians.

15. 12. 42.

P.Q.s on Retail Trade. I answer arranged Question by De La Bere and Doland on Fair Shares, Liabilities (Wartime Adjustment) and the decease of the old Retail Trade Committee. All these go over quite easily, the supplementaries turning mainly on the call up of distributive workers, on which I pass the buck to E.B. (The latter makes a most drastic statement two days later, but this will hit the large shops much harder than the small and, as is only right, distribution harder than production.) I go on to a Lobby Conference on Fair Shares, at which I parade Beale, Weir and Carmichael, my three Chairmen of the Trade Committees, who play their part in answering questions. This new departure has quite a good, though not sensational, press next day. For the time being, I have quite extinguished all press and Parliamentary agitation in favour of small shops. The new plan will begin to work as from January 1st, but there will be no scope for serious

/complai-

-2-

complaint until three or four months later, the Trade Committees remaining in being and acting, most conveniently but quite legitimately, as a cushion between me and any complainants.

Beveridge is being married to-day, and I send a personal note to the Dorchester, where, this afternoon, he is holding a reception, making excuse for my absence that I have been engaged - and I have - in a discussion of his Report by the National Executive of the Labour Party.

16. 12. 42.

A very full day, beginning with a seance on surgical corsets and how to prevent unworthy people claiming these. I am not very happy about the proposals of the officials, ~~but~~ requiring two medical certificates for each afflicted person, one before and one after the fitting of these supports, a plan which seems to me to be vexatious and ineffective.

Casey to see me. An industrious and stupid man, with, so I am told, a rich and ambitious wife. It is said that it was she, rather than he, who fascinated our P.M. on a railway trip in the U.S.A. and persuaded the latter to offer her husband the post of Minister of State in Cairo. He admits to me to-day that, at one moment, he thought it was all up in Egypt, and had all prepared for taking flight. But he says that the transformation of the Army, when the High Command was changed, was quite amazing, within a period of three weeks. Till then our troops, as any troops after so long a retreat would have been, were quite demoralised. But when Alexander and Montgomery had taken over, everything changed. He thinks it very awkward that Rommel has retired from El Agheila, since our lines of communication will be greatly lengthened and there is no water in the Desert of Sirte. I speak to him with caution on our post-war commercial policy, since P.L. has warned me that he is returning via Washington - he did not admit this to me - and may speak unguardedly to Hull and others. To me he says that he does not think the Dominions much care where they sell their produce, so long as they sell it, and that the U.K. does not much care where we buy our food and our materials, so long as we can buy them. Therefore, he would be quite prepared to wash out Imperial Preference in return for a general expansion of trade, and a lowering of U.S.A. and other tariffs. He says that, unless Australia can build up sufficient external markets to allow of a large increase in population, "the Japs will get us in 30 years time". They have nearly done it this time.

/Lunch

Lunch with the Belgian Ambassador. Devonshire - diminutive Duke of, who, it is said, wants to be the next Viceroy, but the P.M. doesn't think he is up to it - says that there are only 462 British Civil Servants in the whole of India. This shows how far Indianisation has gone. I say that this figure ought to be used as propaganda in the U.S. and elsewhere. He also says that, out of many thousands of letters, censored at the source, to Indian soldiers from their relatives, only 10 make any reference to ~~the~~ Congress. Of these 10, 9 are frankly hostile to Congress, and the tenth is quite objective. I say that the Government of India ought to be able, on this basis, to organise, indirectly and discreetly, some alternative political party to the Congress, and prevent the latter from winning so many elections. He does not seem to think this feasible.

Robbins to dine with me. It is a long time since we have had a meal together, and he is slightly self-conscious. But he talks sense on the whole, and is quite amusing. He is strongly on my side on both my Committees (and it was to make sure of this that I invited him to dine with me). He says that Cherwell, once Lindemann, is obsessed with the collapse of the German Home Front in 1918, and the need to prevent any such risk in this country. Hence his opposition to fuel rationing, and his solicitude for the civilians as against the Services in disputes about clothing, etc. L.R. relates that, in June 1940, when things looked blackest, the Beaver, at his most impish, said to Lindemann, after dwelling on the enormity of German armed might and the few miles separating us from them, and the fact that Lindemann's mother had been a Frankfurt Jewess, "When they come here, they will murder me, but they will torture you, Prof.!" And Lindemann wriggled on his seat and looked most uncomfortable.

L.R. says that Beveridge, whose Plan he supports, has still unlimited personal ambitions. He sees himself as a possible future Prime Minister, and certainly as a member of the War Cabinet in the near future. He thinks that he can hear, already, a cry going up next year, after confused political debates and convulsive popular movements in his support, of "Send for Beveridge!" He has been keeping very dingy company, with Clem Davies, Horvabin, and, in the background, Balogh. All these are embittered by our victories. L.R. says that Bridges and Norman Brook - he agrees with me that this is one of the best Civil Servants, both sleep, with him and others, in Cabinet Offices. Bridges never finishes till very late. Now that we two have renewed relations, we shall, no doubt, meet from time to time, and work, on the whole, in harmony, at least during the war.

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17. 12. 42

Lunch at Drapers to meet all the Masters and Clerks of all the other City Companies. Quite a mellow occasion!

I come back to meet the National Association of Outfitters, who have some complaints about margins for men's outer wear. After some argument on figures, and statistical samples, I refer the matter, in an atmosphere of great good will, to a further conference between their blokes and mine.

A word with C.W. on Portal's enquiry into rubber, leather, etc., for the Services. C.W. is keeping in touch with this.

Group Captain Grant comes to arrange my Christmas holiday. It is proposed that we leave on the morning of Christmas Eve by car for Wittering, spending one night there, and then going on to Bircham Newton, near Norwich, for two nights. From there I have arranged with J.W. that I shall go on to Diss for one more night, returning on the Monday.

18. 12. 42.

P.L. and H.G. to see me on films. They are both against the Films Commission which, when I first arrived here, I was advised to advocate. P.L. thinks - rather slyly - that Nigel Campbell, who originally propounded this scheme, saw himself as Chairman of such a Commission. Meanwhile, they think, it would be useful if we could get a man to be both my B. of T. adviser on films and Chairman of the Films Council, in succession to Sir F. Whyte, whom we all regard as a complete failure. The problem is to find the man.

m Lunch with Mrs P. and E.R.A. and encourage her to ask more younger people from the Labour Party to meet various foreigners. Her next party is with the French.

P.L. to see me again on progress of his two Committees. The Report on Commercial Union should be ready very soon, and I want to see the first draft, being made by Shackle, next week before it goes outside the B. of T. The report on Reparations and Economic Security will not be ready so soon, but Keynes, having got across the whole of the rest of the Committee, except his Treasury confrere,

/end

and Malkin, who P.L. says is the weakest member of the Committee, being not only rather deaf but rather slow to see any of the points, is now more inclined to play with the rest. But he showed, at a recent meeting, a complete inability to understand how peace would come, imagining that we were preparing a scheme to be negotiated with the Germans, who would, he supposed, accept part of it but refuse the most drastic bits, and then, in order not to have to go on fighting for a further period, the United Nations would be disposed to accept the German proposition. But, at this, all of them had raised their voices together and declared that what we were planning was to be a dictated peace following an unconditional surrender.

19. 12. 42.

Attend two sessions of Labour Party Central Reconstruction Committee, with Shinbad in the Chair. Too many people, too much talk, too little outcome. Lunch with Laski, who tells me that he lunched alone with the Prime Minister last week! P.M., he says, spoke warmly of Bevin, Morrison and myself, saying of me that, though he and I approached politics from quite different angles, he had a great respect for me, and that I always expressed my views most clearly. But Attlee was never mentioned throughout the conversation. What a little liar! He also spoke ill of Leith-Ross, thinking him to be a man of no intellectual gifts at all, but this, of course, is quite the wrong ground on which to criticise L.R. It was surely in a moment of weakness that Laski admitted that he had never met him before!

20. 12. 42.

Resume discussion on Reconstruction from 10.30 to 12.45 pm. Some of the others are coming back this afternoon, but I cry off. This morning we take a Civil Aviation paper which Phil and I agree is very reactionary, with no attempt to organise even a European C.A. service. I say that, when we and the Russians meet in Berlin we shall be able to decide many things; the Germans must have no aviation industry at all, either military or civil; the little Powers of Europe, i.e., all those except the Russians and ourselves must be prevented from setting up separate national services; we should not make so blunt a statement as this publicly to an innocent world, but we should bear the underlying realities in mind. (Phil at this stage becomes fidgety, not really liking the Russians, and the Americans still less, and dreaming back to the old days at

/Geneva

(Geneva when all the little people spoke out of their turn at the Assembly, and there was no power nor will anywhere.)

Receipt

I tell them that the two Finance papers are merely preliminary, and that we are working out more detail. The Post-War Finance Sub-Committee, of which I am Chairman and J.W. Secretary, has, I am afraid, done very little so far, and I thought someone might say this. I say that the Bank of England has now become a mere branch of the Treasury, and the Joint Stock Banks mere collecting agencies for Government finance. The Treasury Deposit is a wartime invention of great value, and we must seek, after the war, to be most conservative as regards financial institutions, and to hold fast what we have won.

Some talk also on a paper on African Colonies, which, however, is a little out of date, because it still speaks of the Mandates Commission and the Permanent Court of International Justice. Also, it only provides for what I call unilateral benevolence, proposing to place all British colonies in Africa under a regime of international control and supervision, but not insisting on like treatment of French, Belgian, Portuguese and Spanish possessions. I again repeat that, at the end of the war, we shall be in a position to make all these others come into the general scheme, and that, without this, we shall not get a satisfactory international African settlement. I also raise the question that neither the Russians nor the Americans, the other two Great Powers, are given any place in this, and I think they should be. (Poor old Phil mutters dissent when I say that of course the Mandates Commission and P.C.I.J. have now ceased to exist. He seems to have some dim faith in their continuity! I find this nice creature more and more unreal and sleep-walkish.

After some dictation, proceed with Mrs Dean to see a Soviet film, "One Day of War in the Soviet Union". Marvellous propaganda! A series of close-ups, jumping from one sector of the front to another, thus covering a huge canvas - just like Tolstoi's "War and Peace" - with hardly any reserves. Bursting bombs, dead bodies, Germans emerging with hands above their heads from dugouts, Quislings being marched off to execution, the women beating them as they passed through their home villages, and finally a firing squad and the traitor falling dead before your eyes, villages burning, and also corpses of dead Germans, air bombing, tanks crashing through woods, guerrillas blowing up villages, Heroes of the Soviet Union being decorated at the Kremlin, troops marching through Moscow, singing as they go, Sebastopol under attack, Stakhanovites slogging away in coal mines, iron foundries

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arms factories, orphan children - very photogenic - being cared for by their neighbours, to the extent of pots being placed under their beds. And great artistry. Before this, a short film on the care of children; immediately after it a frightful and much too long oration and financial appeal by Mrs Pritt, dressed in red and waving inappropriate arms - the appeal raised £440 - led by £250 from Mr Pritt, provided, no doubt, as part of his fee by the Soviet Embassy; and then The Golden Mountain by Shostakovic, very tuneful and not particularly modern, and a final propaganda film of school children in old Grand-Dukal Palaces. Bevin and Leathers are there, as well as the two Maiskys.

Feeling very Russian, I read War and Peace till -

21. 12. 42.

- 2 a.m. Russian endurance, patience through pain and all degrees of adversity are unchanging. But in 1942 there is a plan and an organisation quite beyond the dreams of 1812. And the Russian Commanders now are younger men than old Kutuzov. Tolstoi's account of the evacuation of Moscow, likened in a marvellous descriptive passage to a queenless hive, and of the burning of the city, due, in his account, not to any Russian plan, as I had always understood, but to the casual knocking out of Napoleon's soldiers' pipes in wooden houses, whose inhabitants had confusedly slouched away, make remarkable reading. 1917 showed no advance on 1812. But 1941 showed a quite new Slav steel frame.

A sense of less to do just before Christmas.

Take Lintott to lunch at the Etoile. We discuss psycho-analysis, etc. He is, when one is in the mood, much more fun, though very King's - which I seldom meet now - than most Civil Servants.

M. Phillips to dine, and talk about Policy Committees, Transport House, etc. He is a little disappointing and stays too long. I have to hint broadly at 10.20 that I have still a good deal to do. He is very cagey, when I try to draw him on his own ambitions for the future. But I am sure that they are large.

22. 12. 42.

First meeting of Cabinet Committee on the "Reform of the Foreign Service". It goes pretty easily, and pretty well for A.E., whose draft W.P. got stuck the other day in a lump of more or less critical rejoinders by his colleagues. This afternoon we meet at No.11, with C.R.A. in the Chair. Simon, absurdly rubicund and healthy-looking - does he, I wonder, ever remember that others remember his record at the F.O.! - K.W., myself, Hudson and Duff Cooper, are the other members, "appointed by the P.M., after consultation with the Foreign Secretary." Stanley also appears, because D.C.'s paper refers to the C.O. Not a bad discussion, as a result of which D.C.'s project for dividing the external service into two world-branches, East and West, wherein the Eastern should include, not only diplomats and consuls in China and Japan, but colonial administrators in Malaya, and perhaps the I.C.S. as well, and also the High Commissioners in Australia and New Zealand, life for a British eastern-world official being passed entirely within this field, and similarly for the western rest-of-the-world, was turned down. Simon pointed out that it would logically involve the creation of two Secretaries of State, one for the East and one for the West, an impossible arrangement. The point was also made that administering Malaysians had little in common with being a diplomat in Chungking. D.C. thought that after the war China would "have to be dealt with" and would be much more difficult, and perhaps more dangerous, than Japan. There were many more Chinese, he said, and they were much cleverer. Clark-Kerr, whom all present unitedly praised, had, he said, been necessarily a child in the hands of the Chinese for the first 12 months of his mission, though for the last two years he had been completely on top of it, and was now doing very well in Moscow.

There was some talk on "transferability" between the Foreign and the Home Services, and A.E. got away pretty well in resisting this, though I suggested that he might admit in his W.P. that in very exceptional cases transfers might take place.

K.W. was anxious, as usual, to hold the whole thing up and to present the W.P. as a series of suggestions, put up for Parliamentary discussion, rather than a series of decisions. But everyone else was against this.

It was stressed that diplomats, after some years abroad,

lost touch very badly with this country, and that it was desirable, at intervals, not only to bring them home, but to attach, or second, them for a period to some home department, or to organise some sort of "refresher course" for them.

H. Johnson
 My Departmental point on the method of appointment to the higher posts in the Commercial Diplomatic Service, now to be fused in the Foreign Service, came at the end. It was decided to defer a decision until H.J. could be present. (Though he neither said, nor wrote, anything to me, I gather that he ran round behind the scenes complaining of my proposal and expressing chagrin that he had not been made a member of this Cabinet Committee I said I was prepared, provided the President of the Board of Trade was specifically mentioned, to accept a provision for no more than "consultation" by the Foreign Secretary. C.R.A. and A.E., both, I think, having been got at by H.J., asked why the present plan could not continue whereby the D.O.T. made recommendations to the F.S. Hudson and Stanley have both been at the D.O.T., the latter also President of the Board of Trade, and were inclined to speak up for this Cinderella. I said that this, after all, was not a major Department, and that I thought, though the point would not really arise for a number of years, that the P.B.T. should be put substantially on the same footing as the F.S., the D.O.T. in effect depending jointly on both these higher powers. It was agreed that no final decision should be taken till the next meeting, at which H.J. should be invited to be present.

23. 12. 42.

Clearing up.

Lunch with deaf Dunbar, alone at the Howard Hotel. J.W. had accepted, but never wanted to go, and has a good excuse to-day in that he has lost his voice. D. says that he is very much happier than when we last met, because he understands that Labour Ministers are meeting each other more frequently, because several good speeches on Reconstruction have been made, e.g., by me and H.M., and because he has now got Citrine interested in Reconstruction. He is awfully stupid, and a crashing bore, as well as being so deaf that one has to shout and repeat simple sentences.

I look forward to leaving Londonto-morrow and forgetting all my shop for several days.

CHRISTMAS WITH THE R.A.F.

24. 12. 42.

Leave at 10.15 with Group Captain Grant for Wittering, where we arrive in time for lunch. This is a Fighter Station where there are at present 151 Squadron - Night Flying Mosquitoes - and 485 Squadron - New Zealanders with Spitfires. They also do blind beam approach training.

I go up in a Mosquito in the afternoon with Wing Commander I.S. Smith, an extremely attractive New Zealander who, at the age of 26, is acting Station Commander. He joined the R.A.F. straight from school in N.Z. We work up to a speed of 320 m.p.h., quickening within about 30 seconds from 160 m.p.h. We were then flying at a height of about 3,500 feet, and I was conscious of no particular sensation except that the ground below seemed to be going past a bit quicker, but this is the same thing as to say that one had the sensation of flying at less height than one really was. At lower speeds we turned about a bit at fairly steep angles and finally landed very beautifully at 120 m.p.h. My pilot told me afterwards that if, when we were flying over 300, I had looked at the engines, I should not have been able to see them, since at this speed there is a sort of cloud formation which hides them. It was great fun. The pilot was talking to the ground on and off during our flight, and in order that he and I could speak to one another, it was necessary for me to put on a wireless helmet and mask over my nose and to press down a button on some gadget on my right hand side.

They have a Strip at Wittering $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles long by 400 yards wide. This is the longest runway in the country, and is much used by our own homing aircraft. Our heavy four-engine bombers often return a good deal shot about and damaged, but can none the less often land quite safely here. If such a strip had been available for the past two years, we should have saved a great number of crashes. The Strip has been made by joining up the Colly Weston aerodrome and the Wittering aerodrome. This was done in the summer of 1941, and the Strip became "fully operational" in the spring of 1942. It was sown with special Air Ministry grass, and the Station engineer did all the work, with no outside labour. They had to cut down two rows of trees, but no other damage of any sort was done to the countryside. The value of this long Strip is that it stops many overshoot crashes, since even if the breaks won't work, the heaviest planes can run on and,

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once their engines are turned off, come to rest within this distance. It also prevents many undershoot crashes, since planes need not try to get down too quickly. Lancasters, Manchesters, Stirlings and many other heavy bombers have used this Strip. More than 100 crashes, they think, have been prevented since this Strip came into use. All the Lancaster group have orders to land here on returning from the Continent.

The man who pushed this through, and finally defeated obstruction in high places, is Air Commodore Basil E. Embry, D.S.O., A.F.C. This man, who used to be the Station Commander here, but has gone to Fighter Command Headquarters, is completely hero-worshipped here. Their eyes light up at the mention of his name, and there was a great thrill when it was announced that he was coming down to spend Christmas Eve at the Station. He is certainly a very striking personality, small and very dark, from County Galway, probably with some Spanish blood.

Here is part of his story, as related to me by Peter Clapham, an attractive young officer who is one of his most ardent worshippers. Embry is now just 40. He has been in the Air Force since 1920. He was a pioneer in developments of stunt flying and instrument flying. He once came in leading his Squadron all flying upside down only 70 feet above the ground, and called out greetings to an astonished agricultural worker over whose head they passed. He won his first D.S.O. on the North-west frontier of India in 1938. He is supposed, by some prompt and gallant action, to have prevented the development of serious trouble amongst the tribes. He won his second D.S.O. for Stavanger, when he led his Squadron of Blenheims in day bombing, day after day, the German aerodromes. The losses were very heavy, and the higher authorities tried to prevent his going out himself, but he always went. He got back on one occasion from Stavanger to Lossiemouth, a distance of 320 miles, with one of his engines dead. He himself took the photographs at the beginning of the war of the German fleet in the North Sea which are published in "Bomber Command".

He got his 3rd D.S.O. for leading the attack on the Maastrich Bridges during the German advance. He was shot down at St Omer on the 26th May, was captured by the Germans, escaped, was recaptured, escaped again, was recaptured the third time, and for the third time escaped. Each time he escaped, he killed several of his guards, and was badly knocked about by the Germans with their rifle butts. When he escaped the third time, our Intelligence intercepted a German message: "Get Embry dead or alive"

/After

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After his last escape, he "went to ground" at once, and spent seven hours in a midden, breathing through a hole. He then got out and dressed in the clothes of a scarecrow which he picked up from a neighbouring field. He made his way to Paris and went about as a beggar. He watched the triumphal march of the Germans through the Arc de Triomphe at a distance of only 100 yards. He went on to Tours by bicycle, one-third of the way on a flat tyre, reconnoitring Orleans aerodrome on the way. At the end of the journey he smashed the bicycle so that it should be no use to the enemy. He then waited eight hours beside a bridge which was strongly guarded. He had no papers with him, but at the end of this time managed to slip across. He finally landed up in Southern France, having been hunted all the way, and spent 19 days in the Pyrenees before he could get over into Spain. Finally, Sir S. Hoare at Madrid was asked to take special steps to get him across. It was, indeed, as Clapham said, "a fantastic story of sheer guts." All the time, he was suffering from wounds, including a piece of shrapnel in his back, and he also developed scurvy. Embry both hates and despises the Germans. He thinks that they are very stupid. During one of his escapes, he picked up a German officer's greatcoat, but had no hat. None the less, he signalled and stopped a German Staff car, got in beside the General sitting at the back, and drove through a whole German Panzer Division. He could not speak a word of German, but occasionally emitted a grunt. When they had passed through these German troops, he put up his hand to stop the car, got out and went off. Apparently no-one suspected anything!

The full story of all these escapes is said to be known only to quite a small number of people, including Portal and Freeman. He is the greatest escapist of the war. After his final escape, he took over Wittering. He was in charge of night fighters here from November, 1940, to November, 1942. He is now in charge of Night Ops at Fighter Command. From October, 1941, to January, 1942, he was in Libya, on Conyngham's staff.

He is an expert house-breaker, an art to which he often had recourse during his escapes, and he has kept a list of all the people in France who helped him, and also of those who tried to hinder him, for future reference.

When he did his escapes, there was no organisation such as there is now. Now a high proportion of our airmen who come down over enemy territory get away. I met two New Zealanders who had done this in the Squadron at Wittering.

/Talking

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Talking this evening to Embry, he advanced the view that in the replanning of London we should have a London Airport in a central position, which should be a strip five miles long by three-quarters of a mile wide. It might stretch, he thought, from somewhere in the blitzed area of the City for the necessary distance. This would mean that all aircraft, however large, could land and take off here. Relatively small aircraft, for civil flying within England and for short trips across to the Continent, could also start from here. It would be, he thought, a very pleasant feature.

It had been hinted to me that at a Fighter Station on Christmas Eve there might be a very rough night. But not at all. There is a most civilised party, with a number of ladies present. The only person whom I saw at all out of control was an American flying officer.

Earlier in the afternoon I had gone round to see the N.Z. Squadron, which has a most remarkable natural leader in the Squadron Commander Reg Grant; a very fine lot of men, both officers and N.C.O.s. I notice here, as continually during these three days, much less formality between officers and N.C.O.s than in either the Army or the Navy. And, indeed, a number of the Sergeants whom I met were on the point of getting their commissions, and a number of the officers had recently been commissioned from the Sergeants' Mess. Nor would anyone say that a very high proportion of Air Force officers were "gentlemen".

Another thing I saw at Wittering was the Control Station at the edge of the runway, from which are operated a great variety of flare paths, to guide in aircraft at night. From here, too, aircraft which have lost their way can get a bearing and be guided in. But, I was told, there is still one deficiency in this otherwise admirable system, namely that this Control Station has not got direct telephone communication with Control Stations at other aerodromes. Therefore, though a lost aircraft can be given a bearing, there is no means of determining how far away the aircraft is. If, however, bearings could be got from two other points, they could "get a fix", defining the position of the aircraft within the limits of "a cocked hat", which would generally be quite small, and so advise where it should land.

I am put up for the night in a house near the Mess - Wittering is one of the oldest established and most comfortable of our pre-war Stations - and everything is most comfortably arranged. Although there was a large crowd at the party to-night, it was the most sober large crowd which I saw during this little Christmas trip.

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Group Captain Grant is a very patriotic adherent of Coastal Command, and asks me, later on, whether I don't notice a great difference between the chaps at Bircham Newton, to which we go on Christmas Day, and those at Wittering. He says that F.C. encourage rowdiness and exhibitionism, and speaks, in slightly shocked tones, of the conduct of a young Fighter pilot who, having had only quite a few drinks, put pepper and salt on a chrysanthemum which formed part of the table decorations, and then ate it. He also does not quite approve of the story told to me with great gusto by Peter Clapham, of a large New Zealander called Mickie, a member of the N.Z. Squadron at Wittering, but now a prisoner in Germany, who stole from St Martin's-in-the-Fields, while on a visit to London, a number of signboards declaring "God is Love", and came away with these religious trophies under his arm. Later that night, when the car refused to start, Mickie was heard calling "God, God, Hullo God! This is Mickie speaking. For God's sake make this bloody car start up." All this, I thought, was rather amusing and engaging. Grant, however, said that F.C. greatly overdid it, and that the result would be that the Fighter Boys would find it even harder than the others to fit in to civil life again after the war. He also said that they were the spoilt darlings of the Air Ministry, and that everything, including bombers, had to give way to a Spitfire when it wanted to land.

25. 12. 42 (Christmas Day) & 26. 12. 42.

Leave by car, after paying a round of calls at the Station, at 10.30 for Bircham Newton. Arrive just before lunch and pay a visit to the Station Commander, a much older and more serious-looking man than the young New Zealander at Wittering. Here I hear that Darlan is dead. They have just heard it on the wireless. They ask me what I think. I say that I am most delighted, and that it might now be possible for the French factions to unite.

This also is a large pre-war Station, with solid buildings and many amenities. There is a great variety of aircraft here, some think inconveniently great. There is a Met Flight commanded by a chubby-faced young man named Braithwaite, son of Major Braithwaite, M.P. Every day, and sometimes three times a day, a Gladiator goes up to 24,000 ft. taking meteorological readings and observations. This is a completely routine operation. Hardly less so, by now, is a flight over Europe, known as Operation Pamper. A single aircraft, a Mosquito, leaves in the morning and in two hours or less is over Northern Italy or Central Germany, or wherever

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the next night's heavy raid is planned. The pilot observes cloud formations, wind, etc., and brings back the news. This may often modify the night's programme. I talk to the pilot who is on this flight, Charles Rose. He is now due for a rest, i.e., to go to be an Instructor somewhere. Grant tells me that he is very lucky not to have been shot down before now. He has got his D.F.C. He says the Alps look quite marvellous from 25,000 ft. up at noon, and one can see them, at that height, from a distance of 250 miles. Mont Blanc, he says, stands up magnificently. He has never been out there in peace time. He might have had to do one of his flights to-day, but, not being required, he plays football against the Sergeants instead. (This illustrates the sharp contrast, utterly unlike anything in the past, between the most dangerous and intense experiences, high in the sky, and the most peaceful and comfortable home life on a Station only a few hours earlier or later.)

There are also a number of Hudsons here which do Air Sea Rescue work and routine patrolling far out over the North Sea. There is a Dutch Squadron who fly Hudsons on anti-shipping forays along the Dutch and Belgian coast.

The weather to-day and next day is very unfavourable to flying. There are very low clouds. Operationally everything is very quiet here over Christmas. I had been promised a flight, but the weather is said to be too bad. I sense a highly prudent intervention behind the scenes by the Station Commander. Otherwise, I might have been taken out over the North Sea, as was half promised on my first arrival. I do not even get up in a Hudson, though I am photographed outside this aircraft with the Air Crew. But one of her engines is cold, and all efforts to warm her up fail.

Here too I am struck by the **easy** relations between officers and N.C.O.s, the comparative lack of saluting, etc. The members of an Air Crew, after much flying together, come to know and trust each other very intimately. The pilot of the Hudson in which I had hoped to go up, was a Southern Irishman named Tyrrell. The rest of the Crew - I am not sure which was the Observer and which the Air Gunner and Wireless Operator - were a quite newly commissioned young man named Hall - probably a clerk in civil life - a sturdy sergeant, due to get his commission in a week or two, named Stan Cramp, in civil life a butcher at Wembley, and another little sergeant whose name I didn't catch, from the North of England. The R.A.F. is much the most classless of the Services.

/During

During my two days' visit I pay a round of calls on various Messes, including two Sergeants' Messes on the evening of Boxing Day. At 12 noon on Boxing Day all the Sergeants come along to the Officers' Mess, and there is a most uproarious sing-song, led by the Dutch. They have some grand songs, though I have no idea what the words mean! (Someone said to me afterwards that all these Dutchmen, particularly at Christmas, try to forget, for their wives and families are either in Holland or in Java and Sumatra under the Japs.)

On Christmas Day I come in late to lunch with a small party with whom I had been making a round of visits, and after lunch I fell deeply asleep, as many others did also, in the bedroom allotted to me. The window was blacked out, and at 6.30 I was awakened by a visit from Group Captain Grant and others, who offered me the choice of a cup of tea and a glass of whiskey. I preferred the tea, and enquired whether it was 6.30 p.m. or a.m. They assured me it was p.m., but I refused to believe them, and turning over, went to sleep again. On next waking, my watch said 11 o'clock. I said to myself "Now it is nearly time for lunch", but turning over, I went to sleep again, and when I next woke, my watch said 4 o'clock. I was vexed at having over-slept my lunch, and told myself that by now I ought to be feeling hungry. I got up and walked down the passage and opened the door into the outer air. It was quite dark. So it was 4 a.m., and they had been quite right when they told me before that it was 6.30 p.m.! Though I slept for four hours more, I was then called in time for breakfast on Boxing Day. I had slept on and off for 16 hours, and felt very fit afterwards.

The flying weather on Boxing Day was so bad that we had to go by car, and not by aeroplane as planned, to West Rainham, a Bomber Station seven or eight miles away. Here we had some tea, and then several rounds of other things, and conversed with an interesting man, Wing Commander Carver, who has spend some time in Iraq and at Aden during this war. He speaks Iraqi fluently, but thinks the inhabitants of that country are the lowest and most despicable types he has ever seen. But he gives a very interesting account of the country, of Mosul and Baghdad, and in the hinterland of Aden. Grant, pursuing his preferences, asked me afterwards whether I had not noticed how much more savoir faire Carver had than the people we had met at Wittering. He said that he was typical of many of the younger officers in Bomber Command. Returning from West Rainham in the dusk, we missed our way several times, and therefore missed several festive parties to which we had been invited before dining with the Station Commander. This was a

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very proper and civilised affair, after which we paid two visits, as mentioned above, to Sergeants' Messes. Nor was there really much row in either of these.

27. 12. 42.

I had intended to arrive at Diss in time for lunch, but am pressed by Grant, Wing Commander Tyrrell and Flight Lieutenant Stephens, to lunch with them at the L'Estrange Arms at Hunstanton. So Grant rings up J.W. at Diss, getting Elsa on the phone, and warns them that, though I shan't be there to lunch, I shall bring seven Air Force officers to see them in the afternoon. Having lunched and dropped Tyrrell, who has a job of work to do at Bircham Newton, the rest of us go on to Diss. We arrive about 5.30 and find that John and Elsa have quite a large party staying in the house. The Air Force driver, who drove me from London on this trip, turns out to be a native of Aldbourne, though he went away before the war. I bid Grant and Stephens and the driver goodbye, having had a very pleasant Christmas with the R.A.F., and felt that Whitehall was many thousands of miles away.

28. 12. 42.

J.W. goes into Norwich in the morning, and E.W. and I, with John's brother Horace, much improved now that he is doing a proper job of work for the British Council, and one of his colleagues from the City of London School, go for a quick walk to Palgrave, look in at the Church and the pub, and get back for an early lunch, after which we three men run most of the way to the railway station, standing awkwardly outside the town. And so back to London.

S E C R E TA I D E M E M O I R E

For the President of the Board of Trade.

R.A.F. Station Bircham Newton.

The name of the Station Commander of R.A.F. Station Bircham Newton is Group Captain T.H.Carr, D.F.C., A.F.C. He has under his command five Squadrons. The following Squadrons are on the Station aerodrome:

(i) 521 Meteorological Squadron. This Unit is commanded by Squadron Leader D.H.Braithwaite. It has a mixed complement of Mosquitoes, with which it does certain long range flights, of a highly secret nature, Spitfires, which go daily up to 40,000 feet, and Gladiators which go daily up to 24,000 feet. The Squadron Commander's father is Major Braithwaite, M.P. He has on his staff, among others, Flight Lieutenant Rose, D.F.M., and Flying Officer Cunliffe Lister, son of Lord Swinton.

(ii) 279 Air Sea Rescue Squadron. This Squadron ^{is} commanded by Wing Commander Paul Lynham, who was on leave over Christmas. In his absence, Squadron Leader R.W.Pye was in command. His brother Flight Commander is Squadron Leader R.T.Tyrrell. Squadron Leader Tyrrell's second in command in his Flight is Flight Lieutenant Keith Stevens. The Squadron is equipped with Hudsons. Its main activity is air sea rescue work off the Dutch coast.

(iii) No.320 Royal Dutch Squadron. This Squadron is commanded by Commander C.Meester. It is equipped with Hudsons and is employed on anti-shipping work against the enemy convoys travelling between Holland, the mouth of the Elbe, and the Baltic.

On the Satellite Docking Aerodrome are two Squadrons which were not visited, No.407 Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force, equipped with Hudsons, and No.280 Air Sea Rescue Squadron, equipped with Ansons.

The President of the Board of Trade arrived at R.A.F. Station Bircham Newton at 1300 hours on Christmas Day. On arrival he was met and entertained by the Station Commander and introduced to a number of the officers. He then discussed at

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length with officers of the Dutch Squadron and of 279 Squadron, certain tactics for increasing the success of our operations against the German North Sea convoy route.....

On Boxing Day, 26th December, 1942, the President visited all the Squadrons based at Bircham Newton between 1000 hours and 1200 hours. In 521 Squadron he had introduced to him Squadron Leader Braithwaite, with whose father he is acquainted, and the other officers, and discussed their operations. In 320 Squadron, Commander C.Meester and Second in Command Lieutenant Commander Goslings, were introduced to him and anti-shipping tactics were again discussed in considerable detail. From there the President proceeded to 279 Squadron, where he was shown photographs and records of their air sea rescue work. From 279 Squadron he went to the Operations Room, where he was met by Flight Lieutenant the Honourable G.R.Bellew, M.V.O., Station Intelligence Officer. He was then shown the details of the Operations Room and operational control of Coastal Command aircraft and the air crew intelligence reading room. His party then returned to the mess, where the N.C.O.s of the Station were being entertained by the officers. There, among others, he met Flight Sergeant Stanley Cramp, Squadron Leader Tyrrell's observer, Pilot Officer Antony Hall, Squadron Leader Tyrrell's first gunner, and Sergeant Burgess, his second gunner; Flight Sergeant Mansell, the Station Photographic Sergeant, who claims acquaintance with Sir Stafford Cripps and has read most of Dr Dalton's works on Economics also Warrant Officer Watkins, the Station Warrant Officer, who reads little, but is a great believer in discipline and the maintenance of the social order. The occasion was exceedingly cordial and accompanied by much singing, particularly on the part of the Dutch.

After lunch it was planned to fly to West Raynham, Bomber Command Station, but this was prevented by inclement weather. The President and his crew were photographed standing in front of a Hudson. As it was impossible to fly to West Raynham, the party travelled there by car and had tea with Wing Commander A.C.P.Carver, the Squadron Commander of the Boston Squadron. In the evening dinner was taken with Group Captain Carr, Station Commander at Bircham Newton, after which Nos. 1 and 2 Sergeants Messes were visited. On returning to the Officers' Mess, a number of officers' wives, including Mrs Tyrrell, were introduced to the President.

On Sunday, the 27th December, 1942, the President bade farewell to the Station Commander, the Squadron Commanders and the

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officers who had met him, and also discussed the Beveridge Report with the Station Commander. He took luncheon at the Lestrangle Arms, New Hunstanton, where he met the landlord, Mr Grey, who was at Cambridge 55 years ago, and Mr Grey's son. He was then driven down to the home of his Labour Parliamentary Private Secretary at Diss.

DIARY

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29. 12. 42.

Put in a paper to the War Cab. on Relief Supplies, proposing that the joint boards in Washington should advise how much each of the United Nations can put into the pool, when the time comes.

With C.R.A. to lunch with Mrs P. to meet Roger Cambon, Desjean and Comert. They all think that Darlan's death has been a bad blow for de Gaulle. The latter is still ludicrously above himself. He said of Giraud, when he was appointed to succeed Darlan, "Yes. He is a good soldier. I think that I could use him and give him some military command." The lack of any political non-military, figure-head for a United France is pitiable.

30. 12. 42.

Decide at E.P.E. Committee to cut oil for Eire by 25%. The knock-kneed Ministry of Fuel and Power have proposed to make no cut at all, though admitting that the Irish were fully expecting a substantial cut.

31. 12. 42.

Overton and Helmore on staff cuts. H.M.'s Cttee. (he, K.W. and H.J.) have asked for a 10% cut. This would mean, on our establishment, nearly 700. My officials can only find just over 250. I tell them that this is not enough, and they must find some more. I suggest, in particular, War Risks and War Damage, which absorb about 1,000 out of a total of 7,000 - a disproportionately large fraction, I feel.

Thence to Press Conference on Utility Furniture. This goes quite well, though Miss K. has to be prevented from creating an atmosphere, when replying to detailed questions, that nobody will really get anything!

Early lunch, and then catch 1.45 p.m. train for Hereford, where I am met by I.T. and taken to his mother-in-law's mansion, now choc-a-bloc with her married children and her grand-children. A remarkable old lady!