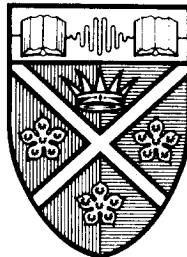


STRATHCLYDE PAPERS ON GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS



*MR ATTLEE'S ENGINE ROOM:
CABINET COMMITTEE STRUCTURE
AND THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT
1945-51*

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and
Andrew Arends*

No. 26

1983

MR. ATTLEE'S ENGINE ROOM

Cabinet Committee Structure and
the Labour Governments, 1945-51.

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AUTHORS' NOTE

We have prepared this paper as a contribution to the 1985 Attlee Centenary and as a tribute to an admirable man and an effective Prime Minister.

Photograph Opposite: Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin in the garden of 10 Downing Street in 1946 (courtesy of The Times).

"He would never use one syllable where none would do."

Douglas Jay, Economic Adviser to Clement Attlee, 1945-46,
Attlee Foundation Lecture, February 1983.

I

Clement Richard Attlee, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, 1945-51, was, in the historical sense at least, a lucky politician. A deeply underwhelming figure, even at the zenith of his titular power - he had no physical presence and on the equivalent of the Richter scale for oratory, the needle scarcely flickered - he seemed dwarfed by Winston Churchill on the Opposition benches, not to mention the big-man beside him at his own Cabinet table, Ernest Bevin. His administration at the time appeared to be afflicted, as, indeed, it was, by sterling crises, strikes, food and raw material shortages, internal dissensions about the pace and goals of nationalization, particularly in the case of the steel industry.

Yet, as the years have gone by, the image of incompetence and extravagance fostered by the Right wing newspapers of the day, of lack of resolution and ideological feebleness propagated by the more radical British socialists, and of general drabness and extreme puritanical devotion to an equal sharing of miseries by the more sybaritic sections of society have been replaced by something altogether nobler and more substantial. The diminutive, monosyllabic former solicitor from Stanmore, in the

north west suburbs of London, is not placed by folk memory upon the pedestal where Gladstone, Disraeli, Lloyd George and Churchill rub shoulders. But his virtues enjoy a scarcity value in the British political climate of the 1980s - old-fashioned integrity and sense of duty of the district commissioner variety (he was educated, after all, at Haileybury, Staff College of the imperial administrator), a genuine, but non-saccharine concern for the deprived in society, a sharp way of dealing with the daft and the dissident in his own party, a capacity to deflate the rodomontade of Churchill across the floor of the House of Commons. Perhaps the virtue most appreciated, with over 30 years of hindsight, is his sheer effectiveness. Late 1940s Britain, like early 1980s Britain, felt itself strapped for cash. Yet Attlee's Whitehall achieved things, substantial things, on very little money: the "socialisation" as they called it then, of "commanding height" industries like coal and rail, plus the gas and electricity supply utilities, not to mention the Bank of England; the foundation of the National Health Service was a jewel in the crown; demobilizing five million men and women from the Armed Forces was a huge economic and social task; improving the bases of social insurance along Beveridge lines; implementing the 1944 Education Act (though at ground level, this was done by the local authorities), reforming a Victorian penal system. All these were crammed into six years of austere administration.

On the foreign, defence and imperial side, there was the

occasional, immensely damaging shambles like the withdrawal from Palestine. Offsetting that was Indian independence, the Brussels and later the North Atlantic Treaty, regarded by many as the greatest and most vital achievement of all, the securing of Marshall Aid (American and Canadian money, but a great deal of push and direction from Bevin), and, unless you are spiritually at one with the ladies of Greenham Common, the building of the British atom bomb despite the McMahon Act choking off the supply of United States know-how to which British scientists and engineers had contributed markedly during World War II. One way and another, Attlee looks better with every passing year - a kind of benevolent, public school master, whose sense of duty and justice raised him above the sectional partisanship of class or party, characteristics fully explored in Kenneth Harris's excellent biography.(1)

Perhaps the best, albeit backhanded compliment paid to Attlee during his centenary year was the first party political broadcast put out by the Conservatives after their overwhelming victory in the 1983 general election. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher had been returned to office with a majority of 144 seats, only two less than the postwar record achieved by Attlee himself in 1945. Some of her closest advisers began to suggest that future scholars would judge Mrs. Thatcher's most significant contribution to history to have been the killing of the Labour Party.(2)

As if to substantiate that view, the Tory broadcast on July 20, 1983 took on the one Labour Party Leader Conservatives had tended to exempt from their strictures. Indeed, Attlee had been frequently invoked by Labour's opponents to show just how puny were his successors in terms of character, policy and performance. The broadcast began with a "voice over" which stated:

"To understand why today we are fighting a war against rising prices we need to go back to the end of the second world war, to 1945. The people of Britain had a new vision of how they wanted life to be. An end to poverty and squalor, decent homes for families and plenty of jobs for everyone.

To pursue this vision, the Attlee government committed itself to spending virtually half of what this country earned. The intentions were good but such massive spending soon made the people feel poorer, not richer, and it created even more problems than it seemed to be tackling."(3)

During her first premiership Mrs. Thatcher would often remark that she needed two terms of office to change the political and economic climate of Britain in order to reverse the decline of decades. During the 1983 election campaign, that was extended to three. Privately members of the government would wonder if they could ever achieve such a transformation, whatever the electoral arithmetic, so deeply entrenched were the attitudes and institutions associated with World War II and the Attlee era that followed. It was, in its way, a remarkable tribute to

Attlee's performance between 1945 and 1951, six years marked by austerity rather than affluence, money shortages rather than public expenditure glut, that over 30 years later, one of the most singleminded prime ministers of the century should quail at the prospect of dismantling the Attlee legacy.

II

One of the questions this Attlee retrospective raises is how, why was he so effective? Paul Addison provoked the thought in his New Statesman review of the Harris life, when he wrote:

"...we still await a major analysis of the dynamics and achievements of the Attlee government...how and why was all this accomplished? What were the mechanics of the Attlee era?"(4)

Attlee had many factors working in his favour. The political nation his administration inherited in July 1945 was, by historical and subsequent standards, a highly self-disciplined one. Almost six years of total war had left no citizen untouched by its rigours, whether in the form of the siege economy on the "Home Front" or by military service abroad. The population was used to receiving orders and to strict regulation in face of shared dangers. From the Government's point of view, the condition of the people was a policy-maker's boon, all the more so as such self-restraint and national unity initially took the habitual pessimists in Whitehall by surprise. "However

ingeniously and wisely the civil and industrial controls and rationing schemes may have been devised...", wrote Sir Richard Hopkins, Head of the Civil Service and Permanent Secretary to the Treasury 1942-45, "they would not have achieved that full success but for the goodwill with which amid the strain and stress of war they were accepted by industry and by the community as a whole." This goodwill, he added, "went beyond - in my judgement much beyond - any forecast which could reasonably have been made before hostilities began."(5)

Despite these advantages, we can easily think of several former and subsequent British Prime Ministers who would have squandered such a legacy. They would, too, have found plenty of alibis to hand, huge debts, not least the sterling balances (a perpetual Sword of Damocles over the Treasury), exhausted capital industries, a labour force more fully and effectively mobilized than any other on the Allied or Axis sides, and more thoroughly worn out as a result. Part of the explanation of Attlee's success - and it can be no more than that, though it is significant, is the effective manner in which he ran the Whitehall machine, above all its Cabinet Committee structure, the engine room of central government in Britain.

It should be noted that some scholars of the period would stress other aspects of the Attlee government in explaining its effectiveness. For example, Paul Addison suspects: "The secret

of the Attlee administration's success lay in the dynamics of particular departments and ministers and Attlee's willingness to devolve rather than in his capacity to co-ordinate across departments.(6)

There is another good reason for focussing on this aspect of the Attlee years. At the Public Record Office we now have, thanks to the 30-year rule for secret documents, a near-complete set of Cabinet and Cabinet Committee minutes for his administrations of 1945-50 and 1950-51. Given Britain's reluctance to behave like other western democracies when it comes to official information (see the superb paper by Brian Hogwood and Tom Mackie)(7) this is the nearest we can get to the real thing. It represents a valuable archive for contemporary policy analysts as it is not too far removed from the Cabinet Office machines run by later post-war governments.

The pre-war administrations of Baldwin and Chamberlain were essentially non-interventionist. The scale of governmental activity in the 1930s bears little relationship to post-1945 realities. But in considering Attlee's performance, it is to those inter-war years that we are obliged to turn as the starting point. In Kenneth Harris's judgement:

"Attlee was the only prime minister of this century to come to Downing Street with a well-considered view of the nature of the job, the demands of Cabinet government and the best method of running an administration. His only contribution to Labour Party thinking before the war had been a long memorandum on the reorganization of government, written in 1932."(8)

Its chief theme was the need to facilitate strategic policy-making by freeing a senior core of ministers from day-to-day departmental responsibilities. Mr. Harris notes:

"His own Cabinet only partly incarnated these ideas. He reduced the Cabinet's size, partly by putting the three service ministers under a minister of defence who alone had Cabinet rank. He toyed with the idea of an inner ring of overlords - Morrison, Dalton, Bevin, Cripps and Greenwood - but eventually gave Dalton, Bevin and Cripps departments to run."(9)

It is possible to treat Attlee's Whitehall machine as a straightforward continuation of the model developed during World War II. It is true that the Coalition's elaborate Cabinet committee structure was as well-suited for the purposes of postwar economic reconstruction as it had been for mobilising the country's resources in war. Equally, the Coalition had prepared the ground for significant advances in social policy, education and family allowances in particular. It had also, self-consciously, considered the bureaucracy needed to underpin such increased state activity. In 1942 Sir John Anderson, then Lord President of the Council, chaired the first meeting of a ministerial committee on the machinery of government, which sat

for the remainder of the war.(10)

Though its membership was bipartisan, it should not be supposed that the ideas of the Anderson committee, any more than the huge bureaucratic apparatus of World War II Whitehall, would have remained unaltered if Churchill had held on to office at the 1945 general election. After the fall of the Lloyd George Coalition in 1922, the Conservatives had stripped down the official machine with a will.(11) On his return to Downing Street in 1951, Sir Winston took great pleasure in culling several of Mr. Attlee's Cabinet committees, up to 20 in one day according to legend, though he did not tamper with the foundations of the postwar Cabinet machine.(12)

Depicting Attlee's thoughts in the 1930s and the practical experience he gained in the wartime coalition is an intricate task. 1945-51 really was government by committee - hundreds of them, more than under any other postwar prime minister. They are listed in Appendix I. The Government included 148 standing committees that we know about from Public Record Office files. Another 12 remain a mystery, their papers retained in the Cabinet Office under the Public Records Acts sections 3(4) or 5(1). These were supplemented by 306 ad hoc committees known as GENS (for general).(13) Mr. Attlee's engine room consisted of a grand total of 466 committees, standing, ad hoc, ministerial, official or a mixture of both breeds. They accumulated over 6½ years.

In the three years 1976-79, Mr. James Callaghan commissioned about 160 GENS, a similar rate to Mr. Attlee's.(14) As Mrs. Margaret Thatcher entered her fifth year in Downing Street her MISCs were in the nineties.(15) Cabinet committees are one area, at least, in which she has succeeded in rolling back the boundaries of the State.

III

Drawing a comprehensible blueprint of Attlee's Cabinet machine is a huge task. This paper is a first rough draft.(16) We have concentrated on a few dips and runs into the wealth of documentation. The best way of acquiring a feel for the priorities and processes of a Government is simply to plunge up to one's neck into their paperwork. Cabinets generally are at their most active in the first two years of an administration when Whitehall is flat out in the attempt to turn manifesto pledges into statutes. We have selected for our plunges two weeks apiece in January 1946 and January 1947. Cabinet and Cabinet committee activity for the period is recorded in Appendices II and III. They afford a vivid indication of the scope of Government. Ministerial nervous energy was devoted in January 1947, for example, to training for the Armed Forces,(17) fuel supplies for industry,(18) the decision to manufacture a British atomic bomb,(19) the composition of the legislative

Council of the Colony of Singapore,(20) and the maintenance of essential supplies during a strike by London lorry drivers.(21)

Anybody familiar with the Cabinet Office machine of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s will notice a number of similarities and some glaring omissions. There was a Defence Committee. This was an Attlee innovation. It met for the first time in January 1946. He chaired it. He and Ernest Bevin dominated it.(22) Attlee was uncharacteristically talkative in this committee, with waspish remarks and contributions. Lord Bullock, Bevin's biographer,(23) says of the Defence Committee:

"Attlee and Bevin picked who they wanted for it. They only had old Albert Alexander (Minister of Defence). They could always put him under the table."(24)

"The sight of a general always goaded Attlee. It was Major Attlee confronted with the brasshats.(25) He was a very good, assertive chairman of the Defence Committee."(26)

There was, however, no foreign affairs committee. Recent administrations have all had one. Foreign affairs and defence are taken together, for example, in Mrs. Thatcher's Oversea and Defence Committee.(27) The absence of a foreign affairs group in 1945-51 is very striking. In effect, Attlee and Bevin did the job themselves as a two-man committee who consulted the full Cabinet when they thought it necessary.

The Attlee-Bevin partnership was an unassailable core in the

1945-50 Government (Bevin was a very sick man by 1950). Not only did it protect Attlee's leadership from assault by Morrison in 1945 and Cripps in 1947, they forged a traditionally fractious collection of Labour prima donnas into an effective team. So dominant was their partnership that they could dispense with collective arrangements for foreign policy-making beneath the level of full Cabinet without challenge from their colleagues.

Lord Bullock believes the decision to do without a foreign affairs committee was "very deliberate". Attlee ceded a great deal of power to Bevin on the foreign side. No other Prime Minister has felt it wise to defer so fully to his Foreign Secretary. Attlee never went back on this unspoken bargain even when he thought Bevin was wrong as in the speed of the British withdrawal from Palestine in 1947-48. According to Lord Bullock:

"What Attlee did in reality was to say 'I'm going to hand over my prerogative on foreign policy to Bevin. So I'm certainly not going to hand it over to a committee.'"(28)

The other lacuna, at least for the period July 1945 to September 1947, was the absence of a standing committee to deal with economic strategy as a whole. Production, food, manpower and fuel policies, all crucial in that era of reconstruction and shortages, each had their own committee.(29) But it took the convertibility crisis of July-August 1947 to precipitate a rejigging of the machine which produced yet another Attlee

innovation that has been consolidated by successor administrations. From September 1947 to October 1951 when Attlee left office, the Economic Policy Committee (EPC) became and remained a commanding height in Whitehall.(30)

So significant was this benchmark that Douglas Jay uses it to separate what he sees as the two phases of the Attlee Governments, the ad hoc period of 1945-57, and the post-EPC period.

"EPC was overseas as well as home. It involved our expenditure on defence overseas, major questions of convertibility, Marshall Aid, relations with the United States and the European Recovery Programme."

The work pattern of EPC will be examined for the pre-devaluation sterling crisis of 1949 in part IV of this paper. Attlee chaired it but did not dominate in the style he imposed on the Defence Committee. Gallipoli meant he knew about war and strategy. But, as Harold Wilson, who joined the Cabinet as President of the Board of Trade in November 1947, recalls:

"Attlee was tone deaf as far as all economic questions were concerned, unless they involved the kind of people he knew - trade unionists, miners, dockers."(31)

Other standing Cabinet committees were important in terms of co-ordination both before and after the September 1947 rethink. Attlee continued the wartime practice of leaving a great deal of

Home Affairs to the Lord President's Committee under Herbert Morrison. (Morrison had been endowed with a kind of economic overlordship pre-September 1947 but did not prove particularly effective).

The Committee on the Socialisation of Industries, also chaired by Morrison, provided the motive power which turned the nationalisation programme into reality.(32) Arthur Greenwood's Social Services Committee had a similar function when it came to constructing the welfare state. Greenwood was past his prime and never after 1945 matched up to the specification of an "overlord". When a genuinely complicated or controversial question which divided ministers arose in this field the Cabinet would be the forum for its resolution. For example, when Morrison challenged Aneurin Bevan's(33) desire to incorporate local authority hospitals in a new National Health Service, the matter was resolved, in Bevan's favour, after detailed discussion in full Cabinet on October 18 and December 20, 1945.(34)

There was one lower order committee, however, which seemed to have fulfilled its purpose of lightening the load of higher forums. Douglas Jay attributed considerable significance to the Production Committee of 1947-51 chaired by Cripps and later Gaitskell:

"Though EPC was supreme, and a final court of appeal, the

Production Committee on the Home Front was the effective co-ordinating and initiating authority, which met much more often. In home economic policy, it always seemed to me the real nerve-centre."(35)

IV

For the first 20 months of its life, Attlee's Economic Policy Committee was not required to transform itself into a crisis management organisation. 1948 was a good year for the British economy in contrast to 1947 which Dalton later characterised as the "annus horrendus" of the Attlee era.(36) Stimulated by substantial tranches of Marshall Aid and an impressive domestic industrial recovery, the economy gathered strength. In the spring of 1949, however, a deepening recession in the United States created a sense of unease, almost menace in Whitehall. By the time ministers returned to London in the first week of June from the Labour Party Conference in Blackpool, they had a full-blown currency crisis on their hands as Britain's gold and dollar reserves melted at an alarming rate. EPC was at its epicentre.(37) The minutes taken by Stephen Luke and Geoffrey Wilson are very full but very dry.(38) We need Hugh Dalton the diarist, the Richard Crossman of his day, to add flavour.(39) For example, after a particularly fraught meeting of EPC in 10 Downing Street, on June 15, 1949, which discussed a paper prepared by Cripps absolutely brimming with grim statistics,(40) Attlee turns to Dalton and says "1931 over again."(41) On June

28, Cripps circulates an even more desperate analysis. "Sinister old junk", notes Dalton.(42)

Its succession of meetings in June-July 1949 show EPC to have been a fairly inadequate body for managing crises. There were a number of reasons. There was very little ministers could do to stem the outflow of gold and dollars apart from tighten import controls, cut consumption and seek assistance from Commonwealth Finance Ministers (all of which they did) unless they opted for devaluation from \$4.03 to the pound to a more realistic level in terms of world trade and British competitiveness. Until the end of July, they were not prepared to face up to the inevitable, though the possibility was discussed often enough at EPC.(43)

In this instance, the Whitehall machine was incapable of making up EPC's mind for it, even if ministers had had an inclination to let it. Top officials could not agree on a solution. Sir Edward Bridges, Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, did the honourable thing, told Cripps of the lack of consensus and asked his senior colleagues to provide individual briefs for the Chancellor.(44)

Gaitskell and Jay were the first to accept the need for devaluation in the last days of July. A number of officials, most notably Sir Elwin Plowden, Mr. Robert Hall and Mr. R.W.B.

"Otto" Clarke had been of that opinion since the spring. Attlee was persuaded once sufficient of his most trusted economic advisers, on both the ministerial and official sides, accepted there was no alternative if the gold and dollar outflows were to be stymied. Douglas Jay recalls:

"Clem treated economics very much like medicine - a subject on which there were experts and on which it was wise to find a second opinion."(45)

In another policy area, the use of a standing Cabinet committee as a mechanism for crisis management proved particularly effective after an uncertain start. The Attlee administration was as formidable, probably more formidable than any government before or since when it came to handling the consequences of essential industries, supplies and services hit by labour disputes.(46)

In June 1945, during Churchill's "caretaker" administration, Sir Alexander Maxwell, Permanent Secretary to the Home Office, had taken the initiative on industrial emergencies and convened an official committee to consider whether the inter-war Supply and Transport Organisation should be reconstituted to cope with postwar labour troubles. The Home Office lost no time in pressing the matter upon the incoming Labour Government. With an unofficial dispute paralysing several British ports, Attlee, Bevin, Morrison and Greenwood met on October 8, 1945, with no

civil servants present (Attlee wrote up the minutes himself) and agreed that an organisation at "official level" would be established and a ministerial committee under the Home Secretary, James Chuter Ede, would be commissioned to prepare a scheme. (47)

Unusually for Attlee, progress was desultory until the spring of 1947 when, in response to the London lorry drivers' strike in January and the appalling blizzards of February - March, a standing Cabinet group, the Industrial Emergencies Committee, was established with a supporting Emergencies Organisation.

The dominant figure at the ministerial level was Chuter Ede. On the official side, Sir Frank Newsum of the Home Office took the lead and proved immensely effective in preparing the first really detailed contingency plans since Sir John Anderson had refashioned the emergencies machine for Stanley Baldwin prior to the 1926 General Strike. Planning embraced the whole range of public utilities, the distribution of food and fuel. Where miners, power workers and water workers troubled later administrations, dockers gave Ede and Attlee their greatest headaches with the troops marching on to the waterfronts with monotonous regularity in 1945, 1948, 1949 and 1950. Ede's group, which was reconstructed as the Emergencies Committee in 1950, showed a firmness of grip and a thoroughness in terms of analysis that would be the envy of any government.

Picking three ad hoc committees from a total of 306 can only be the merest appetiser to a huge archival feast. The trio selected are fairly juicy. The files of one of them GEN 183, Attlee's Cabinet Committee on Subversive Activities are retained in the Cabinet Office under section 3(4) of the Public Records Act, 1958, so sensitive are their contents. Though an idea of their secrets can be gained from other papers impinging on the task of mole-proofing Whitehall. GEN 163, the Committee which authorised the manufacture of the atomic bomb met once, but the sheer gravity of the issue, plus the intriguing way in which Attlee picked his colleagues for the job, merits its inclusion. Finally, the first of seven postwar defence reviews was undertaken in 1949 in conditions of such secrecy that its existence was not discovered until 1980 when a batch of its files were declassified at the Public Record Office. GEN 296 was the Cabinet Committee Attlee convened to deal, inconclusively as it turned out, with the review's findings.

A senior Ministry of Defence official in the late 1970s judged the outcome of GEN 163, which met in the Cabinet room on the afternoon of January 8, 1947, to be an "of course" decision. He was right for a number of reasons. GEN 75, the ministerial group on atomic matters which met regularly, had already authorised the construction of a plutonium plant. The Royal Air

Force had in November 1946 circulated aircraft manufacturers with the specification for a new bomber, with a huge bay for carrying a "special bomb". This aircraft turned out to be the Vulcan. Britain had pioneered atomic research. British scientists had played a significant part in the preparation of the weapons dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. The United States Congress, ignorant of the Quebec Agreement of 1943, which established collaboration and consultation on both the military and civil use of atomic power between the United States and Britain, cut off the transatlantic flow of information in 1946 with the McMahon Act.

This only made Bevin more determined than ever to have an atom bomb with a Union Jack on it, as he liked to tell GEN 75.(48) Bevin, as the minutes of GEN 163 reproduced in Appendix IV show, was moved as much by the unreliability of the United States as an ally (this predates the North Atlantic Alliance by more than two years) as by the potential menace of the Soviet Union as an adversary. GEN 163 is intriguing for another reason - its composition. Bevin, Morrison, John Wilmot, the Minister of Supply (the department responsible for producing the bomb) and A.V. Alexander, Minister of Defence, are obvious attenders. But why was Lord Addison, the veteran Dominions Secretary there, while Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Cripps, President of the Board of Trade, were not?

Attlee swore by Addison and trusted his judgement, which is why, incidentally, as Lord Privy Seal in 1949, he was a member of EPC. In conversation with his former press secretary, Francis Williams, in 1960, Attlee said: "Another very valuable man in all sorts of ways was old Christopher Addison. Great experience you see. An excellent conciliator."(49)

As for exclusion of Dalton and Cripps, Attlee gave an indication of the reason in 1958 when asked by John Mackintosh why he had not informed the Cabinet of the decision that Britain should become a nuclear power: "I thought some of them were not fit to be trusted with secrets of this kind."(50)

GEN 75 papers declassified in 1982 at the request of the BBC Television programme **TIMEWATCH** revealed that Dalton and Cripps, who were members of that committee, had made plain their objections to expenditure on the atom bomb as it represented a substantial drain on the economy as a whole.(51) GEN 163 was GEN 75 minus Dalton and Cripps. Attlee, clearly, was determined that the decision should go through on the nod. It was another example, as Lord Bullock said in connection with the Defence Committee, of Attlee and Bevin picking who they wanted.(52)

It is not only the intense nuclear debate of the 1980s which makes GEN 163 fascinating to contemporary observers. MISC 7, Mrs. Thatcher's Cabinet Committee on Polaris replacement, has

certain uncanny similarities. It was convened in the strictest secrecy and for the purpose of keeping the decision to build a third generation nuclear force out of the hands of the full Cabinet. MISC 7 was also aware of a Bevin-style consideration which could not be admitted publicly - the desirability of preserving a British nuclear capability well into the twenty first century in case the United States should become an uncertain ally, and retreat into a variety of isolationism.(53)

When looking at GEN 183, Attlee's Cabinet Committee on Subversive Activities, we are eavesdropping on another great British fixation - the unearthing of highly placed "moles" at the heart of the British establishment.(54) Though its papers are retained in the Cabinet Office registry indefinitely, a combination of nibbles in Attlee's own papers and the briefs supplied him by Sir Norman Brook, his Cabinet Secretary, enable a fairly clear reconstruction of events to be attempted.(55)

GEN 183 is intriguing, quite apart from its potential as rich novel material, for its reactive style. It was a rushed and, in many ways, reluctant attempt to fashion some kind of defence against the degree of Soviet penetration of western public services revealed by the defection of Igor Gouzenko in Ottawa in September 1945. In March 1948, Mr. Attlee's purge procedure was announced as a method for removing communists and fascists from sensitive Whitehall posts. It was rudimentary in

the extreme, involving a quick check on MI5 and Special Branch files. Under pressure from the Americans and Canadians after the arrest of Dr. Klaus Fuchs in February 1950 and the defection of Donald Maclean and Guy Burgess in April 1951, GEN 183 approved in principle the introduction of positive vetting for sensitive jobs which involved an active investigation into the pasts of their occupants. Attlee was reluctant to take this step as he loathed the infringement of civil liberties in the United States caused by the anti-communist purges which by this time, were getting out of hand thanks to Senator Joe McCarthy. Attlee had left office and GEN 183 had disappeared with him by the time the Churchill administration introduced the new practice in January 1952.

The first trace of the 1949 defence review to reach the public domain in 1980 was a passionately phrased minute from the Admiralty arguing that the Royal Marines should not be disbanded as an economy measure. Not only was an amphibious force necessary, it argued, the Royal Marines provided bands for the entire Naval Service and were, therefore, indispensable.(56) The Admirals were briefing their minister, Lord Hall, First Lord of the Admiralty, on how to resist cuts implicit in the findings of a working party commissioned by the Prime Minister to advise on methods for keeping the Defence Estimates inside a ceiling of £700 million in the period 1950-53. Chairing the working party, which consisted of the Chiefs of Staff, was Sir Edmund Harwood, a senior official from the Ministry of Food, whose job, clearly,

was to act as an honest broker between the competing interests of the warrior politicians from the War Office, the Admiralty and the Air Ministry.

Attlee convened a special Cabinet committee on the size and shape of the Armed Forces, 1950-53, GEN 296, to consider the Harwood Report. It met only once in 10 Downing Street on July 5, 1949, in the middle of the sterling crisis that was causing such stress inside EPC. It consisted of Attlee, Bevin, Cripps, Alexander, Emanuel Shinwell (Secretary of State for War), Hall, Arthur Henderson (Secretary of State for Air), and Sir Harold Parker, (Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Defence). (57)

GEN 296 set the pattern for all postwar defence reviews in the way ministers presented their opening bids. Cripps said given the recession, not a penny more than £700M could be provided for defence. Alexander said the issue was vital for Britain and the Commonwealth. Contraction to meet the £700M target would be "disastrous" economically, politically and strategically. Further sacrifices to maintain Britain's defence position were necessary. Attlee, summing up, said the issue was grave. More time was needed before final decisions could be taken. He urged the service ministers to seek economies.

Unlike its successor reviews, the Harwood exercise was never carried through. The Korean War, which erupted in June 1950,

blew it away and led to a trebling of the defence estimates.(58)

VI

There is tendency for Whitehall-watchers to treat the Cabinet committees as a kind of inner temple. Penetrate them and the hidden mysteries will be revealed; to proceed further would be superfluous. The huge archive of the Attlee years now open to scholars shows just how misleading such a judgement can be.

Even a miniature "What the committees never saw" exercise uncovers fascinating and important material which did not feature on the agenda of a standing or an ad hoc group. On the economic side, just about the most dramatic reading available is a contingency plan prepared by Otto Clarke at Dalton's request during the 1947 convertibility crisis. It outlined a survival plan for Britain if Marshall Aid failed to materialise, trickled in late or in inadequate amounts because of Congressional opposition.

Clarke, with a tiny group of helpers from the Treasury, the Board of Trade, the Bank of England and the Central Economic Planning Staff, produced a "famine food programme", a scheme for directing labour on to the land, a plan for a new sterling bloc which would engage in autarkic trading. Only with such measures

could recovery occur by 1950. Clarke's doom-laden file concludes with the words that such dramatic adjustments would need "...a complete and total national mobilisation, as far-reaching as that of 1940. It would only be by these drastic means that we could hope to get through."(59) There is no evidence that the Clarke contingency plan was ever discussed at Cabinet committee level.

The same applies to other examples of doomswatching on the economic side.

In February 1948, Mr. Ernest Rowe-Dutton of the Treasury was asked to prepare a "Sterling War Book", a contingency plan for a devaluation of the pound, which he duly did.(60) Mr. Edward Playfair, another Treasury Second Secretary, revised it in June 1949 at the height of the sterling panic. Otto Clarke, a former journalist with a brilliant head for figures, much sought after for his powers of vivid and rapid expression, was summoned once more in late July 1949 to consider yet another awful prospect - what would happen if Cripps and Bevin failed to carry the Americans during their devaluation talks in Washington?(61) EPC had not a whiff of Rowe-Dutton, Playfair or Clarke.

There are comparable examples on the foreign side. One of the more intriguing is another le Carré-type body, the Russia Committee, a Foreign Office concern, reconstituted in 1949. It was a pure cold war outfit. The Chiefs of Staff sent a

representative. A minister attended, Mr. Christopher Mayhew, Minister of State at the Foreign Office. But an official, Sir Gladwyn Jebb, took the chair, an intriguing constitutional position. Its job was to plot Britain's response to Soviet acts and intentions. It was essentially a planning body. Occasionally an ultra sensitive topic intruded such as the desirability of reviving the World War II Special Operations and Political Warfare Executives for clandestine activities against Soviet satellites. It was felt Bevin would not approve and the idea was dropped.(62) There is no sign that such issues reached the Cabinet's Defence Committee, although they could feature in minutes still retained in the Cabinet Office on the grounds of sensitivity.

VII

In an illustrated hagiography of Attlee published in 1949,(63) the kind of sycophantic work about an incumbent Prime Minister which rapidly fades, there is the usual batch of pictures showing the great man "relaxing", as picture caption-writers invariably say, at home - Attlee, pipe in mouth, mowing the lawn at Stanmore is the genre - frame one shows him, flat-capped and plus-foured, foot on workbench, sawing. The caption reads: "Infinite satisfaction in simple jobs..."(64)

For all its sugary tone it captures the man. He had a simple, direct, approach to government; it was a matter of getting the job done. Lloyd George and Aneurin Bevan were "artists in the use of power".(65) Attlee was an artisan in the use of power. His very modesty and lack of complication were his strengths.

His style of government reflected them. Attlee ran Britain between 1945 and 1951 with a red crayon and a tiny vocabulary. On the steering briefs supplied him by Sir Norman Brook and Mr. Robert Hall from the Cabinet Office, or on submissions from Douglas Jay, William Gotell Barnes, his personal assistant, or Mr. Leslie Rowan or, later, Mr. Laurence Helsby, his principal private secretaries in Number 10, Attlee would scribble "Yes", "No", or, if unusually enthusiastic about a proposal, "Agreed", "C.R.A.", hence Douglas Jay's syllabic judgement on our frontispiece. Helsby told Kenneth Harris (though he is not identified by name in the biography) that Attlee was "orderly, regular, efficient and methodical to a degree that put him in a different class from any of the prime ministers who followed him".(66)

Attlee's engine room reflected his spare, terse style. There were variations. EPC in crisis in June-July 1949 showed him, like every prime minister, so far, who has followed him in Number 10, the prisoner of the foreign exchange markets and

dependent upon external assistance from financial allies. In Cabinet he was an effective, if rarely assertive chairman. In the Defence Committee he asserted. On the atomic bomb in GEN 163 he let Devin make the running while packing the committee to ensure the result.

GEN 183 shows him fighting the cold war at home as well as abroad and breaking new ground in terms of policy-making. GEN 296 represents a rare example of vacillation. Britain's financial plight was dire in July 1949. But it had to be weighed against the prospect of Stalin's divisions and the need to strengthen the fledgling NATO.

In fact, Attlee's Cabinet committee system proved immensely durable. Its bone structure is discernible in the Thatcherian descendant of the 1980s. The process of survival began in the autumn of 1951 when Brook prepared a brief for the incoming Churchill administration bringing Sir Winston up to date on developments since July 1945 and claiming: "During the past ten years the system of standing Cabinet Committees has proved its value as a means of relieving the Cabinet of a great weight of less important business".(67)

He suggested the new Prime Minister should establish immediately a Defence, Legislation, Lord President's and Economic Policy Committee before reviewing existing sub-committees at his

leisure. He drew Churchill's "particular attention" to the Official Committee on Communism (Home) "the existence of which we keep as secret as possible".(68) With the Cabinet Secretary as continuity man, the Attlee model was passed on to the next administration, a function performed by Brook and his successors at subsequent changes of premier; a practice which helps explain the stability of British Cabinet structure compared to say its United States equivalent.

The efficiency of Attlee's engine room is, it must be re-emphasised, only part of the explanation of his success. Without it, said Douglas Jay, there would have been muddle and unnecessary obstacles. The central, though immeasurable factor was the partnership with Bevin.

Douglas Jay recalls:

"It really was a much better government than one realised at the time. The major factor was the complete partnership between Clem and Ernie Bevin. There was complete trust and respect between the two. Ernie's personality was so massive and forceful. If those two were united, nobody could stand against them because there was a final authority."(69)

Lord Bullock concurs:

"There have been few if any partnerships in British Government as close or successful as that between Bevin and Attlee. Attlee discussed the whole range of government business with Bevin as with no other minister; he looked upon him as a guarantee of the continued support of the trade union movement, and he knew (as the unsuccessful attempt of 1947 shows) that no move to challenge his own position as Prime Minister could succeed as long as Bevin remained loyal to him".(70)

In the summer of 1947 Cripps and Dalton had a plan to replace Attlee with Bevin. Bevin killed it by telling Dalton "I'm sticking to Little Clem".(71) Little Clem doesn't look so puny now.

FOOTNOTES

1. Kenneth Harris, Attlee, Weidenfeld, London, 1982.
2. Private information.
3. Transcript of party political broadcast of July 20, 1983, supplied by Conservative Central Office.
4. Paul Addison, "Child Labour", New Statesman, 17-24 December, 1982, pp.22-23.
5. Introduction to Lessons of the British War Economy, D.N. Chester (ed.), Cambridge, 1951, p.2.
6. Paul Addison, letter to Peter Hennessy, June 7, 1983.
7. Brian Hogwood and Tom Mackie, "Cabinet Committees in Executive Decision-Making: A Comparative Perspective", Studies in Public Policy, No. 111, (Centre for the Study of Public Policy, Strathclyde University, 1983).
8. Harris, p.401. The memorandum is reprinted in Appendix III of the biography.
9. Ibid.
10. J.M. Lee, Reviewing the Machinery of Government, 1942-1952, London, 1977, p.6.
11. Stephen Roskill, Hankey Man of Secrets, Vol. 2, London, 1972, Ch. 11.
12. Anthony Seldon, Churchill's Indian Summer, London, 1981, p.117.
13. Visitors to the Public Record Office may be confused by this figure when they discover Mr. Attlee's highest numbered ad hoc committee was GEN 380. GEN 1 to GEN 73 were Coalition or "Caretaker" Government Groups. Nowadays, the Cabinet Office goes back to 1 with each change of administration, alternating between GEN and MISC (for miscellaneous).
14. Private information.
15. Private information.
16. Refinements will follow. Comment would be welcome.
17. GEN 160. Public Record Office, CAB 130/16.

18. GEN 161. PRO CAB 130/16.
19. GEN 163. PRO CAB 130/16. Just about the most awesome set of minutes from the Attlee era, they are reproduced in Appendix III. GEN 163 is examined in greater detail below.
20. C (47) PRO CAB 134/52.
21. GEN 165 PRO CAB 130/16.
22. PRO CAB 134/656. In the war-time Coalition, Attlee had sat on the Defence Committee (Operations). We are grateful to Paul Addison for pointing this out.
23. His third volume dealing with Bevin at the Foreign Office will be published at the end of 1985.
24. Other members included Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Pethwick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, Addison, Dominions Secretary, the individual service ministers and the chiefs of staff.
25. Attlee had served with distinction in World War I at Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia and France. But he acquired and retained a dim view of the quality of top military leaders, though he made notable exceptions when individuals demonstrated their competence.
26. Conversation with Lord Bullock, March 4, 1983. See also; Lord Bullock, "Ernest Bevin as Foreign Secretary". BBC Radio 3, August 9, 1982.
27. House of Commons, Hansard, May 24, 1979. As a gesture towards open government, she announced the existence of four committees, UD, Home Affairs, Economic Strategy and Legislation.
28. Conversation with Lord Bullock, March 4, 1983. Attlee admired the experience Bevin had acquired as an international trade union leader: "Years before he went to the Foreign Office, he had a vast knowledge of industrial, financial and social conditions in many different countries", The Observer, March 13, 1960.
29. Bevin tended to dominate on the home front, too. His experience at the Ministry of Labour and National Service 1940-45 left him as well-informed in these areas as he was opinionated.
30. Shortly after the foundation of EPC, Dalton left the Treasury after a pre-budget indiscretion in November 1947. He was succeeded by Sir Stafford Cripps who was himself replaced, on grounds of ill-health, by Hugh Gaitskell in October 1950.

31. Sir Harold Wilson, A Prime Minister on Prime Ministers, London, 1977, p.297.
32. This is one corner of Mr. Attlee's engine room which has already found its chronicler. See Sir Norman Chester, The Nationalisation of British Industry, 1945-51, (HMSO), 1975.
33. Bevan, as Minister of Health, had responsibility for local government and housing as well as the foundation of the National Health Service.
34. PRO, CAB 128/1, CM (45) 43rd Conclusions.
PRO, CAB 128/2, CM (45) 65th Conclusions.
35. Douglas Jay, Letter to Peter Hennessy, April 7, 1983.
36. See the chapter bearing that title in Hugh Dalton, High Tide and After, London, 1962.
37. Its membership in June 1949 was Attlee, Bevin, Morrison, Cripps, Dalton, Bevan and Addison. Non-members, though they always attended, were Wilson, Gaitskell (Fuel and Power), (Transport), Tom Williams (Agriculture), John Strachey (Food).
38. PRO CAB 134/220.
39. The original of his diary can be consulted in the British Library of Political and Economic Science.
40. PRO CAB 134/220.
41. Dalton's Diary, June 15, 1949.
42. Ibid., June 30, 1949.
43. Sterling was eventually devalued to \$2.80 on September 18, 1949.
44. These became known as the "Caliban File" - "Caliban" being the code name for devaluations in June and July. Once it was agreed it became "Operation Rose". Bridges had them bound together in a leather-backed volume which can be found at the PRO as 1.269/1.
45. Conversation with Douglas Jay, March 4, 1983.
46. See Chapters 6 and 7 of Keith Jeffery and Peter Hennessy, States of Emergency : British Governments and Strikebreaking since 1919, London, 1983.
47. PRO PREM 8/673.

48. Peter Hennessy, "How Bevin saved Britain's Bomb", The Times, September 30, 1982.
49. Francis Williams, A Prime Minister Remembers, London, 1961, p.81.
50. John P. Mackintosh, The British Cabinet, Paperback edition, London, 1968, p.796 ff.
51. "How Bevin Saved Britain's Bomb", The Times, September 30 1982.
52. There is nothing unusual about this. Mr. James Callaghan, for example, did the same with his late 1970s GEN groups on official secrets reform and industrial democracy. In both cases he kept enthusiasts either in a minority or off the committees altogether.
53. MSC 7 is an even smaller group than GEN 163. It includes Mrs. Thatcher, Mr. William Whitelaw (Home Secretary), Sir Geoffrey Howe (Chancellor of the Exchequer) and whoever was Foreign and Defence Secretary at the time of its meetings. See Peter Hennessy, "Cabinet's Atomic Bomb Minute Restored to File", The Times, July 21, 1980.
54. Mr. John le Carre, market leader in British spy novels, has a sensitive feel for the hidden bureaucracy of Whitehall: "little reading rooms at the Admiralty, little committees popping up with funny names... words of congratulation from on high, people one's never heard of getting grand medals for nothing." John le Carre, Linker, Sailor, Soldier, Spy, London, 1974, p.28.
55. This is displayed in Peter Hennessy and Gail Brownfeld, "Britain's Cold War Security Purge: The Origins of Positive Vetting", The Historical Journal, 25, 4 (1982), pp.965-973.
56. PRO - ADM 1/21315.
57. PRO CAB 130/53.
58. Henry Roseveare, The Treasury: The Evolution of a British Institution, London, 1969, p.315.
59. PRO. 1229/136. See also Peter Hennessy "Otto's horrors: the nightmare we narrowly escaped", The Times, November 27, 1979.
60. PRO. T236 (no piece number).
61. PRO. T269/3.

62. PRO, FO 371/77623.
63. Vincent Brome, Clement Attlee, A Pictorial Biography, London, 1949.
64. Ibid., p.33.
65. This marvellous phrase is Kenneth O. Morgan's. See his "Bevan, Architect of the NHS", New Society, February 17, 1983, p.256.
66. Harris, p.404.
67. PRO CAB 21/2654.
68. Ibid.
69. Conversation with Douglas Jay, March 4, 1983.
70. Lord Bullock. BBC Radio 3, October 3, 1982.
71. Douglas Jay, Change and Fortune. A Political Record, London, 1980, p.135. Discussing the basis of their friendship nearly ten years after Bevin's death, Attlee wrote: "I... think he liked the fact that I didn't talk much", The Observer, March 20, 1960.

APPENDIX I

Attlee's Cabinet Committees

Standing Groups

Name	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
Defence Committee	DD	158	Attlee	1946-51	Cab. 131/1-11
Lord President's Committee	LP	128	Morrison	1946-51	Cab. 132/1-18
Sub-committee's on:					
Compensation	CB	3		1945-47	Cab. 132/26
Industrial					
Productivity	CIP	18		1948-50	Cab. 132/28
Committee on Scientific Policy	ESP	4		1945-46	Cab. 132/52
Natural Resources Committee	NR	1		1950-51	Cab. 132/53
Official Committee on Controls	OC	1	Brook	1945-46	Cab. 132/58
Overseas Scientific Relations	OSR	14		1948-51	Cab. 132/62
Council on Scientific Policy	SP	43		1947-51	Cab. 132/70
Committee on Atomic Energy	SP(AE)	1		1950	Cab. 132/71
Africa Committee	A	2		1949	Cab. 134/1
Advisory Committee on Atomic Energy	A(AE)	25		1945-47	Cab. 134/6
Ministerial Committee on Atomic Energy	AE(H)	89		1947-51	Cab. 134/21
Committee on Absenteeism in the Coal Industry	AM	11		1946-48	Cab. 134/24
Atlantic Committee	AOC	56		1950-51	Cab. 134/34
Battle Memorial Committee	BEM	3		1945-46	Cab. 134/37
Committee on Gaming and Betting	BIG	3	Chuter-Ede	1946	Cab. 134/43
Committee on Exports	BP(E)	10		1947	Cab. 134/44
Exchange Requirements Committee	BP(ERC)	15		1947	Cab. 134/45
Overseas Negotiating Committee	BP(ON)	69		1947	Cab. 134/46
Colonial Affairs Committee	C	19	Addison	1945-47	Cab. 134/52

Name	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
Commonwealth Affairs					
Committee	CA	14		1947-50	Cab 134/54
Civil Aviation Committee	CAC	17	Addison	1945-51	Cab 134/57
Airfields Committee	CAF	3	Chuter-Ede	1946-47	Cab 134/61
Coal Committee	CC	3	Dalton	1946-50	Cab 134/62
Committee on Control of Investment	CCI	4		1949	Cab 134/63
Committee on Colonial Development	CD	27		1948-51	Cab 134/64
Committee on Defence Research	CDR	2		1945	Cab 134/88
Controls and Efficiency	CE	11		1948	Cab 134/89
Commonwealth Economic Affairs	CEA	106		1949-51	Cab 134/90
Committee on Economic Controls	CEC	4		1948-50	Cab 134/95
Commonwealth Development	CD	3		1949	Cab 134/96
Committee on Fuel Economy	CFE	1		1951	Cab 134/97
Control of Official Histories	COH	4	Chuter-Ede	1946-49	Cab 134/104
Committee on places of profit under the Crown	COP	1		1946	Cab 134/113
Productive Capacity	CPE	26		1951	Cab 134/114
Commonwealth Relations	CR	12		1947	Cab 134/117
Statutory Immunities	CSI	3		1950-51	Cab 134/120
Civil Service					
Manpower	CSM	10		1946-48	Cab 134/122
Development Changes	DC	2		1949	Cab 134/129
Distribution of Industry	DI	11		1947-50	Cab 134/130
Distribution and Marketing	DM	14		1950-51	Cab 134/132
Operation of Statutes	DS	3		1950	Cab 134/135
External Economic Policy & Overseas Trade	ET	5		1945-46	Cab 134/165
Emergency Accounting Committee	EAC	8		1947-49	Cab 134/170
Committee on Exports	EX	27		1948-51	Cab 134/166-69
Emergency Business Committee	EBC	7		1945	Cab 134/172

Name	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
Fleet Business Committee	FBC	2		1950	Cab 134/174
Emergency Committee	EC	25		1947-49	Cab 134/175
Economic Development Committee	ED(O)	17		1945- 50	Cab 134/186-93
Overseas Economic Information Committee	EIC(O)	11		1945- 48	Cab 134/200
Emergency Legislation Committee	EL	10		1945-51	Cab 134/203
Committee on Equal Pay	EP	2	Greenwood	1947	Cab 134/209
Economic Policy Committee	EPC	150		1947-51	Cab 134/215-30
Exchange Requirements Committee	ERC	19		1940-51	Cab 134/268
Economic Steering Committee	ES	34		1950-51	Cab 134/263
Fuel Allocation Committee	FAC	12		1947-48	Cab 134/270
Festival of Britain	FBO(O)	NA		1950-52	Cab 134/271
Fuel Committee	FC	23		1947	Cab 134/272
Food Distribution Committee	FD	9		1948	Cab 134/276
Far Eastern Committee	FE(O)	86		1945-51	Cab 134/277/91
Franco-German Coal Authority	FG	6		1950	Cab 134/293
Future Legislation Committee	FL	29	Greenwood	1946-51	Cab 134/298
Foreign Labour Committee	FLC	11		1947-49	Cab 134/301
Freight Movement Coordination Committee	FMC	2		1945-48	Cab 134/302
Great Exhibition Centenary Committee	GEC	15		1947-50	Cab 134/304
Government Information Services Committee	GIS	7		1945-46	Cab 134/307
Government Organization Committee	GOC	7		1947-51	Cab 134/310
House of Commons disqualifications Committee	HCD	30		1949-51	Cab 134/315
Housing Committee	HG	7	Attlee	1945-47	Cab 134/320
Hotel Industry Committee	HI	3		1950-51	Cab 134/321
Home Information Committee	HIS	1		1951	Cab 134/322
Legislative Committee	HPC	155	Greenwood	1946-51	Cab 134/323
India and Burma Committee	IB	68	Attlee	1945-47	Cab 134/341
Imports Diversion Committee	ID	12		1948-51	Cab 134/349

Name	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
Industrial Energy Committee	IEC	6		1945-47	Cab 134/353
Home Information Services	HI	5		1946-48	Cab 134/354
Economic Information	HI(O)(E)70			1947-51	Cab 134/361
Home Affairs Committee:					
Industrial Problems	10	1		1945-46	Cab 134/368
Investment Programme Committee	IPC	58		1947-51	Cab 134/437
Information Services Committee	IS	11		1948-51	Cab 134/459
Domestic Aspects of Korean War Committee	KC	3		1951	Retained
Committee on the King's Speech	KS	11		1948-51	Cab 134/467
Labour Committee	LC	4		1947-48	Cab 134/469
Local Government Committee	LG	3		1949	Cab 134/470
Materials Committee	M	139	Gaitskell	1945-51	Cab 134/475
Mutual Aid Committee	MAC	86		1950-51	Cab 134/498
Malaya Committee	MC	11		1950-51	Cab 134/497
Development Policy Committee	MD	3		1949	Cab 134/499
Middle East Committee	ME(O)	14		1945-50	Cab 134/503
Economic Planning Committee	MCP	8		1946-47	Cab 134/503
Machinery of Government	MG	6	Morrison	1946-50	Cab 134/504
Ministerial Group on Parliamentary Procedure	MG(P)	14		1945-47	Cab 134/507-08
Manpower Aims Committee	MP	9		1946-47	Cab 134/509
National Health Service	NH	10		1950-51	Cab 134/518
Official Coal Committee	OCC	15		1950-51	Cab 134/523
Committee on Disarmament	OD	21		1947-51	Cab 134/528
Overseas Economic Policy	OEP	10		1946-47	Cab 134/541
Official Hospitality	OH	2		1946	Cab 134/542
Ministerial Committee on Overseas Information Services	OI	5		1946-48	Cab 134/543
Use of Official information in private publications	OIP	2		1946-47	Cab 134/548
Overseas Negotiation Committee	ON	N.A.		1948-51	Cab 134/555

Name	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
Overseas Mail	OM(SC)	8		1946-48	Cab 134/551
Official Oil Committee	OOI	10		1947-50	Cab 134/588
Official Productivity Committee	OP	20		1948-51	Cab 134/591
Overseas Reconstruction Welfare of Overseas Students	ORC	36	Bevin	1945-50	Cab 134/600
Oil Supplies in War	OSW(EE)	4		1951	Cab 134/606
War Potential Committee	P	4		1945-46	Cab 134/607
Programmes Committee	p	151		1948-51	Cab 134/608
Production Committee	PC	97		1947-51	Cab 134/635
Post-War Defence Committee	PWD	7		1945-46	Cab 134/656
Reform of Legal Procedures	RLP	6		1945-47	Cab 134/657
Raw Material Committee	RM	79		1950-51	Cab 134/658
Regent Park Terraces	RPT	17		1946-47	Cab 134/665
Shipping Committee	S	3		1950-51	Cab 134/667
Port Emergency Planning	S(PEPC)	NA		1950-51	Cab 134/669
China and South East Asia	SAC	9		1949-50	Cab 134/669
Steel Economy Committee	SE	4		1949-50	Cab 134/676
Socialisation of Industry	SI(M)	74	Morrison	1946-51	Cab 134/687
Official Committee	SI(O)	30		1945-51	Cab 134/693
Social Services Committee	SS	32	Greenwood	1945-47	Cab 134/697
Interdepartmental Committee on Security	SSC	NA		1948-51	Retained
Tourist Accommodation Committee	TAC	2		1945-46	Cab 134/710
Trade Negotiations Committee	TN	13		1946-47	Cab 134/711
University Committee	U(O)	1		1946-49	Cab 134/723
UK Representation in India	UKRI	5		1946-47	Cab 134/724
Victory Celebrations	VC	6	Chuter Ede	1945-46	Cab 134/728
Food Supplies	WLS	14		1946	Cab 134/729
Western Union Committee	WU	1		1948	Cab 134/737
Ad Hoc Groups					
Name/Function	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
King's Speech Committee	GEN 74	3	Morrison	1945	Cab 78/35
Atomic Energy	GEN 75	16	Attlee	1945-46	Cab 130/2
Congratulations from Parliament	GEN 76	3	Morrison	1945	Cab 78/36
Far Eastern Planning	GEN 77	1	Samson	1945	Cab 130/4

Name/Function	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
For Eastern Civil Planning	GEN 78	1			
Keynes Mission to USA	GEN 80	NA		1945	Cab 130/6
Raising the School age	GEN 79	1	Morrison	1945	Cab 78/36
Broadcasting	GEN 81	3	Morrison	1945	Cab 78/37
Meetings on Histories	GEN 84	6	Brook	1945	Cab 78/38
Organization of Government					
Publicity	GEN 85	2	Attlee	1945	Cab 78/39
Woodworking Industry	GEN 86	1		1945	Cab 78/39
Working Party on Controls	GEN 87	2	Gilbert	1945	Cab 78/39
Future of Italian Colonies	GEN 88	1	Bridges	1945	Cab 78/39
Financial Negotiations	GEN 89	7	Attlee	1945	Cab 78/37
Organization of Supply	GEN 90	1	Morrison	1945	Cab 78/38
Labour in the Middle East	GEN 91	1		1945	Cab 78/38
Government controls and food policy	GEN 92	NA		1945	Cab 78/38
Controls of Epidemics	GEN 93	6		1945	Cab 78/38
Coal Position for winter 1946	GEN 94	8	Dalton	1945	Cab 78/38
Control of Atomic Energy	GEN 96	2	Bridges	1945	Cab 78/38
Minister Resident in the Far East	GEN 97	1	Attlee	1945	Cab 78/39
Socialisation of Industry	GEN 98	2	Morrison	1945	Cab 78/39
Ceylon Constitution	GEN 99	1	Attlee	1945	Cab 78/39
Junior Minister's Expenses	GEN 100	1	Morrison	1945	Cab 78/39
Policy in South East Asia	GEN 101	2	Bridges	1945	Cab 78/39
Suez Canal Questions	GEN 102	1	Brook	1945	Cab 78/39
War Memorials	GEN 103	1		1945	Cab 78/39
Terms of Service for the Forces	GEN 104	3	Attlee	1945-47	Cab 78/39
Incentives to Production	GEN 105	2		1945-46	Cab 78/39
Reparations	GEN 72	NA		1946-48	Cab 130/1
Atomic Energy in France	GEN 106	NA		1945	Cab 130/8
Rice Shortage	GEN 107	1	Brook	1945	Cab 130/8
Wheat Supplies	GEN 108	6	Brook	1945	Cab 130/8
Parliamentary Control of Colonial Constitutions	GEN 109	2	Morrison	1945-46	Cab 130/8
Political Activities of Civil Servants	GEN 111	4	Dalton	1946-48	Cab 130/8

Name/Function	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
National Insurance Bill	GEN 113	2	Dalton	1946	Cab 130/8
Manpower supplying Forces Equipment end 1945	GEN 114	1	Attlee	1946	Cab 130/8
Economic Planning	GEN 115	NA		1946-47	Cab 130/8
Supply and Transport	GEN 116	2	Chuter Ede	1946	Cab 130/9
Occupational Forces	GEN 117	2	Attlee	1946	Cab 130/9
British Film Industry	GEN 118	3		1946-47	Cab 130/9
Memorial to FDR	GEN 119	1		1946	Cab 130/9
Parliamentary Procedures	GEN 120	3		1946	Cab 130/9
German Industry	GEN 121	1		1946	Cab 130/9
Service Rations	GEN 122	1		1946	Cab 130/9
UK Mission to Japan	GEN 123	NA		1946	Cab 130/9
Administration of Italian Colonies	GEN 124	NA		1946	Cab 130/10
Polish Forces Committee	GEN 125	5		1946-47	Cab 130/10
Coal Miners Rations	GEN 126	1		1946	Cab 130/10
Abolition of Poor Law	GEN 127	1		1946	Cab 130/10
Pensions	GEN 128	1		1946	Cab 130/10
Bricklayers in Forces	GEN 129	1		1946	Cab 130/10
Radio Frequencies	GEN 130	1		1946	Cab 130/10
Use of Official Information	GEN 131	7		1946	Cab 130/10
Establishment of the MoD	GEN 132	3		1946	Cab 130/10
Indian Constitution	GEN 133	1		1946	Cab 130/10
Accommodation for Civil Service	GEN 141	2	Morrison	1946	Cab 130/13
Private Utility Projects	GEN 142	1		1946	Cab 130/13
Mixed Marriages in the Forces	GEN 143	1	Chuter Ede	1946	Cab 130/13
Canadian Wheat Supplies	GEN 144	1	Morrison	1946	Cab 130/13
British Nationality	GEN 145	2	Chuter Ede	1946	Cab 130/13
Military Camps	GEN 146	1	Chuter Ede	1946	Cab 130/13
Municipal Elections					
delay	GEN 147	1	Morrison	1946	Cab 130/13
Service Accounts	GEN 148	1	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/13
Home Information Services	GEN 149	3	Morrison	1946-51	Cab 130/13

<u>Name/Function</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Meetings</u>	<u>Chairman</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>PRO reference</u>
Nuremberg Sentences (Appeals)	GEN 151	1	Attlee	1946	Cab 130/13
Civil Engineering equipment	GEN 152	2	Attlee	1946	Cab 130/13
Timber Supplies	GEN 153	1	Dalton	1946	Cab 130/13
Release of requisitioned land	GEN 154	1	Attlee	1946	Cab 130/13
Service recruitment	GEN 156	1	Alexander	1946	Cab 130/13
Siamese Rice	GEN 157	14		1946-48	Cab 130/13
Care of Children	GEN 158	1	Morrison	1946	Cab 130/13
Psychiatrists in the Services	GEN 159	1	Greenwood	1946	Cab 130/13
Service Land usage	GEN 160	5	Greenwood	1946-47	Cab 130/15
Winter Fuel Supplies	GEN 161	3	Morrison	1946-47	Cab 130/15
Atomic Energy	GEN 163	1	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/16
Transport workers strike	GEN 165	1	Alexander	1947	Cab 130/16
Resettlement of servicemen	GEN 167	8	Wiles	1947-48	Cab 130/17
Economic Planning	GEN 169	2	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/17
Defence cooperation (USA)	GEN 170	1	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/17
Parliamentary Procedures	GEN 171	1	Greenwood	1947	Cab 130/17
Electricity Generating capacity	GEN 172	1	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/17
Electoral Legislation	GEN 173	4	Chuter Ede	1947	Cab 130/18
India questions (see IB Com)	GEN 174	NA		1947	Cab 130/19
1951 Exhibition proposal	GEN 175	1	Dalton	1947	Cab 130/19
Whitefish Industry	GEN 177	2	Baroes	1947	Cab 130/19
Far Eastern (Official) committee	GEN 178	5		1947	Cab 130/19
Balance of Payments (Imports)	GEN 179	15	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/19
National Insurance and Health schemes	GEN 181	4	Greenwood	1947-48	Cab 130/20
Power Station at Bankside	GEN 182	1	Morrison	1947	Cab 130/20
Subversive Activities	GEN 183	NA		1947-51	Retained
Japanese Merchant Shipping	GEN 184	1		1947	Cab 130/20
Indian Transfer of Power	GEN 185	1	Luke	1947	Cab 130/20

Name/Function	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
Commonwealth Relations	GEN 186	2	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/20
Commons members fund	GEN 187	2	Morrison	1947-48	Cab 130/20
Civil Supply					
Function	GEN 189	1		1947	Cab 130/21
Moscow Trade negotiations	GEN 190	2	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/27
European Economic Committee	GEN 191	2	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/27
Oil Refinery capacity	GEN 193	1	Dalton	1947	Cab 130/27
Fire Discussions	GEN 194	6	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/27
Sterling Area Conference	GEN 195	6	Dalton	1947	Cab 130/27
Colonial Development Corporation	GEN 196	NA		1947	Cab 130/27
1948 Dollar Programme	GEN 197	1	Bridges	1947	Cab 130/27
Supply of Energy to Russia	GEN 198	1	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/27
Rice Purchases	GEN 199	2		1947	Cab 130/27
Investment Programme review	GEN 200	1	Brook	1947	Cab 130/27
UK Aid policy	GEN 202	11	Brook	1947	Cab 130/27
Discussions on Afghanistan	GEN 203	1	Attlee	1947	Cab 130/27
Working Party on Palestine	GEN 205	1		1947	Cab 130/28
Tudor I Aircraft	GEN 206	1	Morrison	1947	Cab 130/28
European Committee on Coal	GEN 207	1		1947-48	Cab 130/29
European Committee on stockpiling	GEN 208	4		1948	Cab 130/31
Chief of Staff's Visit to US	GEN 210	1		1948	Cab 130/31
Anglo-Iraqi Treaty	GEN 211	1		1948	Cab 130/31
Whitefish Industry	GEN 214	5		1948	Cab 130/34
Overseas Negotiations: Steel	GEN 215	NA		1948	Cab 130/34
Hostel Programme	GEN 216	1		1948	Cab 130/34
Incomes, Costs, Prices	GEN 218	1		1948	Cab 130/35
International Organizations	GEN 220	NA		1948	Cab 130/36
Commonwealth population	GEN 221	NA		1948	Cab 130/36
House of Lords Reform	GEN 222	7		1948	Cab 130/37

Name/Function	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
India (Kashmir)	GEN 223	11	Attlee	1948	CAB 130/37
Monopolistic Practices Bill	GEN 224	1	Morrison	1948	CAB 130/37
Economic Relations with Eire	GEN 225	2		1948	CAB 130/37
The Marathon Aircraft	GEN 227	1	Addison	1948	CAB 130/37
Palestine/Brussels Treaty	GEN 230	1	Attlee	1948	CAB 130/37
Anti-communist Propaganda	GEN 231	3	Attlee	1948-49	CAB 130/37
Food Policy	GEN 232	1	Morrison	1948	CAB 130/37
Commonwealth Liaison	GEN 233	NA		1948	CAB 130/37
Representation of the People Bill	GEN 235	1	Morrison	1948	CAB 130/37
Commonwealth Meeting	GEN 237	5		1948	CAB 130/37
Agriculture	GEN 238	1		1948	CAB 130/37
Overseas Students	GEN 239	1		1948	CAB 130/37
London Dockworkers Strike; Berlin Situation	GEN 240	1		1948	CAB 130/38
Germany	GEN 241	10		1948-49	CAB 130/38
Burma (compensation)	GEN 242	1		1948	CAB 130/38
Australian Prime Minister	GEN 243	2		1948	CAB 130/38
Price Policy in Socialised Industries	GEN 245	20		1948-51	CAB 130/39
Magistrates Court Bill	GEN 246	1		1948	CAB 130/40
Non-dollar Balance of Payments	GEN 247	2		1948	CAB 130/40
Commonwealth Meeting	GEN 248	5		1948	CAB 130/40
Foreign Affairs	GEN 249	1		1948	CAB 130/41
Commonwealth Defence Policy	GEN 251	1	Attlee	1948	CAB 130/41
Festival of Britain	GEN 252	1	Morrison	1948	CAB 130/41
Armed Forces Size in 1949-51	GEN 254	4	Attlee	1948	CAB 130/41
Productivity on Socialised Industries	GEN 255	1	Cripps	1948	CAB 130/41

Name/Function	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
Civil Defence					
Bill	GEN 256	1	Morrison	1948	CAB 130/41
Legal Aid Bill	GEN 257	1	Morrison	1948	CAB 130/41
Wireless Telegraphing					
Bill	GEN 259	2	Morrison	1948-49	CAB 130/44
Cyrenaica	GEN 260	1	Dalton	1948	CAB 130/44
UN Guard Force	GEN 261	1	Attlee	1948	CAB 130/44
Fire	GEN 262	4	Brook	1948-49	CAB 130/44
Ireland (North)	GEN 262(M)		Attlee	1949	CAB 130/44
Long Term European					
Plan	GEN 263	1	Bridges	1948	CAB 130/44
Financial Colonial					
Defence	GEN 264	1	Attlee	1948	CAB 130/44
Export of Minerals					
to Russia	GEN 265	NA		1948-49	CAB 130/44
Requisitioned					
Land	GEN 266	8	Wilson(CS)	1949	CAB 130/44
Mauritius	GEN 267	2	Attlee	1949	CAB 130/44
Yugoslavia	GEN 268	1	Attlee	1949	CAB 130/44
Western Union					
Defence	GEN 269	1	Attlee	1949	CAB 130/44
Arab League					
Subsidies	GEN 270	1	Attlee	1949	CAB 130/44
Commonwealth Food					
Supplies	GEN 271	3	Duke	1949	CAB 130/45
Strategic					
Stockpiles	GEN 272	1	Brook	1949	CAB 130/45
Sale of Jet Engines					
to Sweden	GEN 274	1	Attlee	1949	CAB 130/45
Future Relations					
with India	GEN 276	2	Brook	1949	CAB 130/45
Aid to undeveloped					
countries	GEN 277	2	Hitchman	1949	CAB 130/45
Burma	GEN 278	5	Attlee	1949	CAB 130/45
Indonesia	GEN 279	3	Attlee	1949	CAB 130/45
North Atlantic					
Pact	GEN 280	1	Attlee	1949	CAB 130/45
Revision of Geneva					
Conventions	GEN 281	3		1949	CAB 130/46
Army Housekeeping					
Duties	GEN 282	1		1949	CAB 130/46
International					
Organizations	GEN 285	NA		1949	CAB 130/46
Council of					
Europe	GEN 286	1		1949	CAB 130/46
Exchange of Information					
with US	GEN 287	1		1949	CAB 130/46

Name/Function	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
Research & Development					
Priorities	GEN 288	2		1949	CAB 130/46
Defence					
Organization	GEN 289	1		1949	CAB 130/46
Strikes	GEN 291	3		1949	CAB 130/46
Programmes Committee:					
Cotton	GEN 292	5		1949	CAB 130/46
Defence					
Discussions	GEN 293	6		1949-50	CAB 130/48
Hong Kong					
Government	GEN 294	1		1949	CAB 130/48
Oil Expansion	GEN 295	69		1949-51	CAB 130/48
Size of the Armed Forces					
Commonwealth Finance					
Meeting	GEN 297	4		1949	CAB 130/53
(Working Party preparation)					
Economic					
Situation	GEN 298	1		1949	CAB 130/53
Gold & Dollar Balance					
of Payments	GEN 299	34		1949-50	CAB 130/53
Socialised Industry					
Iron & Steel Committee	GEN 300	NA		1949	CAB 130/55
US Investment in					
Sterling area	GEN 303	2		1949-50	CAB 130/56
Customs Union	GEN 304	1		1949	CAB 130/56
Preparation for Commonwealth economic meeting					
GEN 305	6			1949	CAB 130/57
Parliament Bill	GEN 306	1		1949	CAB 130/57
Wool Textile					
Industry	GEN 308	1		1949	CAB 130/57
India Payments Dispute					
British Tourist Holidays Board	GEN 310	1		1949	CAB 130/57
Strikes at Power Stations					
Farm Price Review	GEN 314	1		1950	CAB 130/58
Transport Charges	GEN 315	1		1950	CAB 130/58
National Economy in War	GEN 316	1		1950	CAB 130/58
US Air Force Facilities	GEN 317	7		1949-50	CAB 130/58
Resettlement of Refugees	GEN 318	1		1950	CAB 130/59
	GEN 319	2		1950	CAB 130/59

Name/Function	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
Building Industry Policy	GEN 320	4		1950-51	CAB 130/59
Atomic Energy Production	GEN 321	1		1950	CAB 130/60
Integrated Coal & Steel Industry in Europe (proposals)	GEN 322	4		1950	CAB 130/60
Civil Service Staff Organizations	GEN 323	1		1950	CAB 130/60
Full Employment Bill	GEN 324	7		1950-51	CAB 130/60
Immigration	GEN 325	2		1950-51	CAB 130/61
Australian PM's Visit	GEN 327	NA		1950	CAB 130/61
Economic Relations with Japan	GEN 326	8		1950-51	CAB 130/61
Meeting with Australian PM	GEN 329	1		1950	CAB 130/62
East-West Trade	GEN 330	1		1950	CAB 130/62
Overseas Security Operations	GEN 331	4		1950	CAB 130/63
Trade & Economic Briefs	GEN 332	6		1950	CAB 130/63
Exports to Eastern Europe	GEN 333	2		1950	CAB 130/63
Decontrol of Apples & Softwood	GEN 335	1		1950	CAB 130/64
Meeting of ministers on Commonwealth economic studies	GEN 336	1		1950	CAB 130/64
Council of Europe	GEN 337	1		1950	CAB 130/64
Preparations for Commonwealth PM's meeting	GEN 338	5		1950	CAB 130/64
International tin agreement	GEN 339	1		1950	CAB 130/64
Brief for NATO meeting in US	GEN 340	1		1950	CAB 130/64
World Peace Congress	GEN 341	1	Alliée	1950	CAB 130/65
Occupation Budget in Germany	GEN 342	1	Alliée	1950	CAB 130/65
Economic Planning	GEN 343	2	Morrison	1950-51	CAB 130/65
Malaya	GEN 345	NA		1950-51	CAB 130/65
Jet Aircraft Production	GEN 344	1	Alliée	1950	CAB 130/65
Milk in Schools	GEN 346	1	Morrison	1950	CAB 130/65

Name/Function	Code	Meetings	Chairman	Dates	PRO reference
Briefs for PM's					
Washington visit	GEN 347	NA	Brook	1950	CAB 130/65
Allied Military Supplies					
to Yugoslavia	GEN 348	1	Attlee	1950	CAB 130/65
Socialisation of					
Industry	GEN 349	7	Davies	1950-51	CAB 130/65
Defence production					
programme	GEN 351	1	Attlee	1950	CAB 130/65
Cereal Feedstuffs	GEN 352	2	Croome	1951	CAB 130/65
Coal Allocation to					
Industry	GEN 353	1	Gaitskell	1951	CAB 130/65
Tariff Preference	GEN 355	1		1951	CAB 130/66
Lord President's Committee					
on Land requisition for					
defence	GEN 356	5		1951	CAB 130/66
Social Services					
expenditure	GEN 357	1		1951	CAB 130/66
Purchase Tax	GEN 358	1		1951	CAB 130/66
Stone of Scone	GEN 360	1		1951	CAB 130/66
Materials Allocation					
Committee	GEN 361	3		1951	CAB 130/66
Preparation for meeting of					
Commonwealth defence					
ministers	GEN 362	6		1951	CAB 130/66
Airmail Conveyance					
Routes	GEN 364	5		1951	CAB 130/68
Privileges of					
NATO	GEN 366	1		1951	CAB 130/68
Wales & Monmouth-					
shire	GEN 367	1		1951	CAB 130/68
Oil Supplies in					
War	GEN 368	4		1951	CAB 130/68
Revocation of					
Energy Acts	GEN 371	2		1951	CAB 130/69
Relations with workers					
in Socialised					
industry	GEN 372	2		1951	CAB 130/69
Preparation for					
Commonwealth Supply					
meeting	GEN 375	15		1951	CAB 130/70
Leasehold Reform	GEN 376	1		1951	CAB 130/70
Subversive					
Activities	GEN 377	4		1951	CAB 130/71
Fuel Economy	GEN 378	5		1951	CAB 130/71
Post Office					
Tunnels	GEN 379	2		1951	CAB 130/71
Economic Prospects					
for 1952	GEN 380	2		1951	CAB 130/71

APPENDIX II

Cabinet and Cabinet Committee Business, 1-14 January 1946.

TUESDAY, 1ST JANUARY, 1946.

Cabinet Meeting, CM 1(46),

Agenda:

- (1) Foreign Ministers Meeting in Moscow.
- (2) Dutch East Indies.
- (3) Palestine.
- (4) World Wheat Supplies.

WEDNESDAY, 2ND JANUARY.

Civil Aviation Committee, CAC 1(46), Chairman: Addison.

Agenda:

- (1) Heathrow Airport.

Manpower Committee, MP 1(46), Chairman: Bevin.

Agenda:

- (1) Manpower Position as of December 31, 1945.
- (2) Effect of Manpower shortage on export programme.

THURSDAY, 3RD JANUARY.

Cabinet Meeting, CM 2(46),

Agenda:

- (1) Mr. Peter Fraser (visiting) PM of New Zealand. Chief of Staff congratulations on recent honours.
- (2) Germany - Review of British Zone.
- (3) The Entrances to the Baltic, suggested international control.
- (4) Disposal of German Merchant Fleet.
- (5) Greece.
- (6) Migration to Australia.
- (7) Gas Supplies in London.
- (8) Manpower, releases from the Forces.
- (9) Agricultural Wages.
- (10) Regrets on the death of Mr. Will Thorne, MP.

FRIDAY, 4TH JANUARY.

Overseas Reconstruction Committee, ORC 1(46), Chairman: Bevin.

Agenda:

- (1) Control over Japanese Industry for security reasons.
- (2) Japanese Reparations.
- (3) Basic Objectives and Policy for dealing with Japan.
- (4) Burma-Siam Railway.

FRIDAY, 4TH JANUARY. (cont'd...)

Post-War Defence Committee, PWD 1(46), Chairman: Attlee.

Agenda:

- (1) Continued hearings of evidence from Bridges and Ismay.
- (2) Function of Defence Committee: To organize and prepare for total war.

MONDAY, 7TH JANUARY.

Colonial Affairs Committee, C 1(46), Chairman: Addison.

Agenda:

- (1) International Trusteeship system of territories under UK Mandate. Trans-Jordan to be given independence.
- (2) Future of Malaysia and Singapore. Military administration to end in March.

TUESDAY, 8TH JANUARY.

Cabinet Meeting, CM 3(46),

Agenda:

- (1) National Health Service. Bevan to prepare the Bill.
- (2) British Honduras - Dispute with Guatemala (Belize).
- (3) Jewish Refugees.

Legislation Committee, IPC 1(46), Chairman: Jowitt

Agenda: (Lord Chancellor)

- (1) Education Bill - to be published as soon as possible.

WEDNESDAY, 9TH JANUARY.

Committee on Civil Servants Political Activities, GEN III, Chairman: Dalton.

Agenda:

- (1) Degree of political activity permitted to be linked to grade of civil servants.

THURSDAY, 10TH JANUARY.

Cabinet Meeting, CM 4(46),

Agenda:

- (1) London Airport (Heathrow) - Cabinet approves its development.
- (2) International Trusteeship - territories held under UK Mandate.
- (3) Malaysia - Future Constitution.
- (4) London Gas Supplies.

FRIDAY, 11TH JANUARY.

Defence Committee, DO 1(46), Chairman: Attlee.

Agenda:

- (1) Size of the Armed Forces at June 30, 1946 - target set. Details of the services present deployments. Need for reduction drastic.
- (2) Aircraft carrier escort for the Dutch.
- (3) Civilians to be brought home on troopships.
- (4) Indian troops for Java?
- (5) Air-Trooping of men home to be reduced.
- (6) Time to be allowed to get "confidential" material.

Lord President's Committee, LPC 1(46), Chairman: Dalton.

Agenda:

- (1) Width of Public Service Vehicles.
- (2) Working of Open-Cast coal.

Committee for Control of Official Histories, COH 1(46),

Agenda:

- (1) Arranged with authors for the various histories of the Second World War.

MONDAY, 14TH JANUARY.

Wheat, GEN 108, Chairman: Brook.

Agenda:

- (1) Discussion of level of Canadian and Argentine Wheat Supplies to Europe.

National Insurance Bill, GEN 113, Chairman: Dalton.

Agenda:

- (1) Chancellor allowed to use National Insurance contributions to stabilise employment.

India and Burma Committee, IB 1(46), Chairman: Attlee.

Agenda:

- (1) Parliamentary delegation to India.
- (2) Distribution of Legislative and Executive powers between centre and provinces.
- (3) Legislation to remove Statutory Bar to further Indians on the Viceroy's Council.
- (4) Constitutional Issue - Plan of Action to be prepared.

APPENDIX III

Cabinet and Cabinet Committee Business, 1-14 January, 1947.

WEDNESDAY, 1ST JANUARY, 1947.

Defence Committee, DO 1(47),

Chairman: Attlee.

Agenda:

- (1) Palestine - Use of armed forces.
- (2) Defence cooperation between Canada and the USA.

THURSDAY, 2ND JANUARY.

Cabinet Meeting, CM 1(47),

Agenda:

- (1) Peace Treaties - Italy, Trieste, Balkan States, Finland. Forces of Occupation.
- (2) Germany.
- (3) Austria - Preparations for Peace Treaty.
- (4) UN - Meeting of the General Assembly.
- (5) Food Supplies from the USA.
- (6) Future Meetings.

Legislation Committee, LPC 1(47),

Chairman: Greenwood.

Agenda:

- (1) Town and Country Planning Bill - draft approved.

FRIDAY, 3RD JANUARY.

India and Burma Committee, IB 1(47),

Chairman: Attlee.

Agenda:

- (1) Future Policy in India.
- (2) Problem of how to withdraw.

MONDAY, 6TH JANUARY.

Cabinet Meeting, CM 2(47),

Agenda:

- (1) Peace Treaties.
- (2) Germany. Preparations for Foreign Ministers Meeting in Moscow. Socialisation of Ruhr Industry.
- (3) Austria Peace Treaty.
- (4) Spain and Franco.
- (5) France - Economic cooperation needed.
- (6) UN - Use of veto in Security Council.
- (7) Albania - Corfu Channel.
- (8) Egypt.
- (9) Publication of Cabinet Minutes - no information to be released.

MONDAY, 6TH JANUARY.

Coal Committee, CC 1(47), Chairman: Dalton.
(1) Coal and Electricity allocation to power stations and industry; both to be rationed.

India and Burma Committee, IB 2(47), Chairman: Attlee.
Agenda:

(1) Mountbatten worried about Europeans being trapped as breakdown of "law and order" likely.

TUESDAY, 7TH JANUARY.

Cabinet Meeting, CM 3(47),

Agenda:

(1) Coal and Electricity. Critical Shortages. Power Stations to be favoured.

Committee on Service Land Usage, GEN 160, Chairman: Greenwood.
Agenda:

(1) White Paper on training programme of the services.

Colonial Affairs Committee, C 1(47), Chairman: Greenwood.
Agenda:

(1) Legislative Council in Singapore.
(2) Malta's Constitution.

Committee on Economic Planning, MEP 1(47), Chairman: Morrison.
Agenda:

(1) Economic Survey for 1947.
(2) Wages and Prices Policy.

Legislation Committee, HPC 2(47), Chairman: Greenwood.
Agenda:

(1) Electricity Bill.

WEDNESDAY, 8TH JANUARY.

Cabinet Meeting, CM 4(47),

Agenda:

(1) India.
(2) Persian Gulf - Relations with Arab States.
(3) Food - Wheat Supplies from Turkey.

Committee on Atomic Energy, GEN 163, Chairman: Attlee.
Agenda:

(1) Decision to build a British Atomic Weapon.

India and Burma Committee, IB 3(47), Chairman: Attlee.
Agenda:

(1) Sir Gilbert Laithwaite's Report on his visit to Burma.

WEDNESDAY, 8TH JANUARY. (cont'd...)

Machinery of Government Committee, MG 1(47), Chairman: Morrison

Agenda:

(1) Advisory Council on Scientific Policy to be set up.

THURSDAY, 9TH JANUARY.

Committee on Economic Planning, MEP 2(47), Chairman: Morrison.

Agenda:

(1) Lord President's Report on the 1947 Economic Survey.

India and Burma Committee, IB 4(47), Chairman: Attlee.

Agenda:

(1) Burma.

FRIDAY, 10TH JANUARY.

India and Burma Committee, IB 5(47), Chairman: Attlee.

Agenda:

(1) Burma.

(2) Compensation for Officers in India.

Transport Strike Committee, GEN 165, Chairman: Alexander.

Agenda:

(1) Maintenance of Food Supplies during present unofficial strike.

Lord President's Committee, LPC 1(47), Chairman: Morrison.

Agenda:

(1) Penicillin Legislation.

(2) Local Authority Investment Programmes.

(3) Building Industry Wages to be held down.

(4) Reduction in working week for road transport industry should be prevented.

Coal Committee, CC 2(47), Chairman: Dalton.

Agenda:

(1) Supply of Coal to power stations versus industry.

(2) Road Haulage Vehicles to be made available for coal transport.

(3) No Sports special trains to be allowed for duration of crisis.

(4) Mid-Week football matches banned.

MONDAY, 13TH JANUARY.

Cabinet Meeting, CM 5(47),

Agenda:

(1) Road Haulage Strike.

(2) Leakage of Information - Details of GEN 165 meeting on 10 January had been leaked. Lord Chancellor to conduct a leak enquiry.

MONDAY, 13TH JANUARY. (cont'd...)

Cabinet Meeting, CM 5(47)...cont'd...
(3) Production of ground nuts in East Africa.
(4) Japanese Reparations.
(5) Malta Constitution.

Housing Committee, HG 1(47), Chairman: Attlee.
Agenda:
(1) Raw Materials Shortages.
(2) "Finish the Houses" Campaign.

TUESDAY, 14TH JANUARY.

Defence Committee, DO 2(47), Chairman: Attlee.
Agenda:
(1) Defence Estimates for 1947-48.

Fuel Supplies Committee, GEN 161, Chairman: Morrison.
Agenda:
(1) Supply of solid fuel to industry.
(2) Road Transport of coal to power stations.

Legislation Committee, HPC 3(47), Chairman: Greenwood.
Agenda:
(1) Legislative programme for 1946-47 to be increased -
more medium sized bills to be introduced.

APPENDIX IV

16/1

~~TOP SECRET~~

Copy No 11

OM.163/1st Meeting

MEETING OF MINISTERS

CONFIDENTIAL ANNEX. MINUTE 1

(8th January, 1947 - 3.0 p.m.)

RESEARCH IN ATOMIC WEAPONS

The Meeting had before them a Memorandum by the Minister of Supply covering a Note by the Controller of Production (Atomic Energy), (OM.163/1) asking for directions on two points:-

- (a) whether research and development work on atomic weapons was to be undertaken;
- (b) If so, whether special arrangements conducive to secrecy (outlined in paragraph 6 of the Memorandum) should be adopted.

LORD PORTAL said that so far as he was aware, no decision had yet been taken to proceed with the development of atomic weapons. He had discussed the matter with the Chiefs of Staff who were naturally anxious that we should not be without this weapon if others possessed it. About three years' work would be needed to solve the problems of nuclear physics and engineering involved in developing the bomb mechanism. If this matter were handled through the ordinary agencies responsible for weapon development, the result would inevitably be that a large number of persons in the Service Departments and in the Ministry of Supply would be made aware of what was being done. The alternative would be to make special arrangements whereby research could be carried on by the Chief Superintendent of Armament Research (Dr. Penney). He would set up a special section at Woolwich, the work of which would be described as "basic high explosive research". He would be responsible for this work to Lord Portal, who would arrange for the necessary contacts with the Atomic Energy Department and with the Chiefs of Staff in such a way as to ensure the maximum secrecy.

THE FOREIGN SECRETARY said that in his view it was important that we should press on with the study of all aspects of atomic energy. We could not afford to acquiesce in an American monopoly of this new development. Other countries also might well develop atomic weapons. Unless therefore an effective international system could be developed under which the production and use of the weapon would be prohibited, we must develop it ourselves.

6.1.63

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE agreed and said that in his view the arrangements suggested by Lord Portal should be effective in securing the greatest possible secrecy.

THE MINISTER OF SUPPLY said that a considerable amount of work would have to be done, particularly on the engineering side. In two years' time, the staff of all grades which would be employed would amount to about 180 people.

THE MEETING:-

- (1) Agreed that research and development work on atomic weapons should be undertaken;
- (2) Approved the special arrangements for this purpose, outlined in paragraph 6 of the Memorandum circulated by the Minister of Supply (O.M.163/1).

Cabinet Office, S.W.1.0.

10TH JANUARY, 1947.