

SECRET

CAB 4/1632/25

1972/5

CONCLUSIONS OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT STORMONT CASTLE
ON TUESDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 1972, AT 10 30 AM

PRESENT: The Prime Minister
The Minister in the Senate
The Minister of Finance
The Minister of Health and Social Services
The Minister of Education (for Item 5)
The Minister of Agriculture
The Minister of Development
The Minister of State at the Ministry of Development
The Minister of State at the Ministry of Home Affairs
The Minister of State at the Ministry of Finance
The Minister of State at the Department of the Prime Minister

ALSO PRESENT: The Secretary to the Cabinet
The Principal

1. EVENTS IN LONDONDERRY ON SUNDAY, 30 JANUARY

Referring to the discussion in Cabinet on the previous day (Conclusions 1972/4, Item 2), the Prime Minister said that it was hoped that the Public Inquiry could begin on Monday, 7 February; resolutions of both the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland Parliaments would be necessary to enable it to investigate all the matters involved. It was the Government's intention to alter the Parliamentary programme to have the events of the previous Sunday debated in the House of Commons that afternoon.

2. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Referring to the combined effects on electricity supplies in Great Britain of an overtime ban at generating stations and the coal strike, the Prime Minister said that a critical situation was approaching and a state of emergency might soon have to be proclaimed. The Northern Ireland situation was also critical and a meeting of the local Emergency Committee had been convened for the following day.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE JOINT WORKING PARTY ON PROCESSIONS ETC
ON THE BELFAST URBAN AREA PLAN

Referring to the decision of 25 January (Cabinet Conclusions 1972/3, Item 4) for the Ministers most concerned to explore the best method of having the

SECRET

SECRET

CAB4/1636/25

Government's views brought before the Public Inquiry on the Belfast Urban Area Plan, the Minister of State at the Ministry of Home Affairs reported that he, the Minister of Community Relations and the Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Department had made arrangements for these views to be submitted by witnesses appearing in their own right.

4. NORTHERN IRELAND FINANCE CORPORATION BILL

Approval was given to the immediate presentation of the Northern Ireland Finance Corporation Bill as circulated with the Minister of Commerce's Memorandum of 28 January.

5. EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES BILL - SCHOOL LEAVING DATES

The relationship between school leaving dates and the commencement of apprenticeship training being the only outstanding matter in the consideration of the Education and Libraries Bill (Cabinet Conclusions 1972/3, Item 2), Ministers considered the Memoranda of 27 January by the Minister of Education and 28 January by the Minister of Health and Social Services. It was decided that a concession should be given to those school leavers going straight to approved apprentice training and it was left to the two Ministers concerned to decide whether this would be done by introducing an exception, in clearly defined terms, for such people or by authorising a Christmas leaving date for all pupils who wished to take advantage of it. Some delay in the legislative programme was accepted in the interests of having this matter resolved before presentation.

6. BAR FACILITIES IN CIVIL SERVICE CANTEENS

Having considered the Memorandum of 17 January by the Minister of Finance, Ministers accepted that, on the understanding that staff opinion would be properly consulted, Northern Ireland Civil Service Refreshment Clubs should be given the same bar facilities as similar United Kingdom establishments.

SECRET

CAB4/1636/25

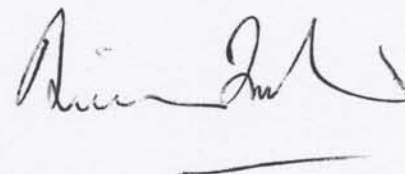
SECRET

7. CABINET PAPERS

Arising out of a complaint by the Minister of Agriculture about the short time given for the consideration of Cabinet papers, Ministers decided that the normal deadline of noon on Thursday for receipt of Memoranda by the Cabinet Office must be strictly observed, with despatch to Private Offices taking place the same day.

8. VISIT ABROAD

Approval was given to the visit abroad notified in the Secretary to the Cabinet's Memorandum of 28 January.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. J. M.' or similar, with a horizontal line underneath.

SECRET