

to turn the small standing army of Britain into the millions of men who did their full share in the defeat of the Central Powers. Mr. Montagu had occupied most important positions in the Government. Mr. Thomas was a member of the government with the weight conferred on him by his chairmanship of the National Society of Railwaymen. There were two officials, men of great experience in departmental work—one of them, Sir George Murray, who made the report on Canadian Administration to which I have referred. Another member was Mrs. Sidney Webb, a lady whose attainments as an investigator have caused her to be on five or six of the most important Commissions established by the Imperial Government in the last ten years.

I shall not attempt to summarize the findings of this report. This would be a difficult task as it is written in a very concise form and great restraint of language, but I shall merely call the attention of the House to certain of their remarks which deal with the question in hand. The report says:—

“The main functions of the Cabinet may, we think, be described as:—

- (a) The final determination of the policy to be submitted to Parliament.
- (b) The supreme control of the national executive in accordance with the policy prescribed by Parliament, and
- (c) The continuous co-ordination and delimitation of the activities of the several Departments of State. For the due performance of these functions the following conditions seem to be essential, or, at least, desirable:—
 - (i) The Cabinet should be **small in number**—preferably ten or, at most, twelve;
 - (ii) It should meet frequently;
 - (iii) It should be supplied in the most convenient form with all the information and material necessary to enable it to arrive at expeditious decisions;
 - (iv) It should make a point of consulting personally all the Ministers whose work is likely to be affected by its decisions and
 - (v) It should have a systematic method of securing that its decisions are effectually carried out by the several Departments concerned.”

It quotes the report of the 1917 War Cabinet which says:—

“The most important constitutional development in the United Kingdom during the last year has been the introduction of the War Cabinet system. This change was the direct outcome of the War itself. As the magnitude of the war increased, it became evident that the Cabinet system of peace days was inadequate to cope with the novel conditions.”

On which the Committee makes the following comment:—“But we think that a rearrangement of the supreme direction of the executive organization as it formerly existed has been rendered necessary, not merely by the war itself, but by the prospect after the war.”