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SECRET.

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1542-B.

(Also Paper No. C.O.S. 868.)

COMMITTEE OF IMPERIAL DEFENCE.

NEW ZEALAND: CONFERENCE ON PACIFIC QUESTIONS.

6-38. (Previous C.I.D. Paper No. 1455-B.)

REPORT BY THE CHIEFS OF STAFF SUB-COMMITTEE.

7025/2/39 A CONFERENCE between representatives of the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia is to take place in New Zealand starting on the 14th April, 1939. We have thought it desirable to place on record for the information of the Committee of Imperial Defence the history of the genesis of this Conference and the matters which are to be discussed thereat.

2. In paragraph 8 of a despatch* dated the 20th May, 1938, the Governor-General of New Zealand made the suggestion that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom might possibly think it advisable that representatives of Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand should meet at some suitable point to discuss Pacific Island matters. In our Report† on this despatch we referred to this suggestion and made tentative proposals on the subject of the United Kingdom Defence representatives in case such a Conference were to take place.

3. The Committee of Imperial Defence considered this question and agreed—‡

* * * * *

“(c) That the Dominions Office should take up with the New Zealand Government the question of a Conference between representatives of Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand to discuss Pacific Island matters.

(d) With reference to conclusion (c) above, to take note of the views of the Chiefs of Staff as to the Service Representatives who should attend the Conference, and of the Secretary of State for the Colonies that the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific should also be associated with it.”

Subsequent Developments.

4. As a result of the above Committee of Imperial Defence conclusions, telegraphic correspondence took place between the Dominions Office and the Governments of New Zealand and Australia. The relevant telegrams are reprinted as Annex I to this Report. It will be seen that in Telegram No. 1, the Dominions Office signified the agreement of His Majesty's Government in

* Annex to Enclosure to C.I.D. Paper No. 1455-B.

† C.I.D. Paper No. 1455-B.

‡ C.I.D. 331st Meeting, Conclusion 14 (c) and (d).

the United Kingdom with the proposal to hold a Conference, and that His Majesty's Government in Australia notified their concurrence in Telegram No. 5.

Agenda for the Conference.

5. When the Conference was originally proposed it was understood that its object would be to discuss Defence matters of local interest, particularly those relating to the importance of certain Pacific Islands. The despatch which contained the suggestion for a Conference dealt chiefly with proposed air routes in the Pacific, and the importance to be attached to certain islands was thought to be derived from their usefulness as calling places for aircraft flying on these routes. In their telegram of the 24th December, 1938 (Telegram No. 3), the New Zealand Government made it clear that they desired to widen considerably the scope of the discussions at the forthcoming Conference, and in a subsequent telegram (Telegram No. 7) they stated fully the matters which they proposed to place on the Agenda.

6. We gave careful consideration to the Agenda, and we advised the Dominions Office to reply in the sense of their telegram of the 1st February, 1939 (Telegram No. 8). The views of His Majesty's Government in Australia evidently coincided with ours, as they telegraphed on the 15th February, 1939 (Telegram No. 10), similarly suggesting a narrowing of the scope of the Conference and asking for papers to be circulated.

7. The views of the New Zealand Government were elaborated in their telegram of the 17th February (Telegram No. 12), but we thought it wise to adhere to our previous conclusion that the discussion on those items raising questions of first-class importance should be purely exploratory, and that the United Kingdom Delegation at the Conference should only be empowered to deal with immediate practical problems, reserving other matters for report on the conclusion of the Conference.

Representation.

8. In paragraph 6 of our previous report (C.I.D. Paper No. 1455-B) we gave our provisional opinion on the composition of the United Kingdom Delegation to the suggested Conference. We have reconsidered the question in the light of the Agenda forwarded by the New Zealand Government, and of the evident desire on the part of that Government for an authoritative defence delegation from the United Kingdom. Apart, therefore, from any representatives appointed by the Dominions Office and the Colonial Office, we decided to request the Australian Government to permit Vice-Admiral Sir Ragnar Colvin and Lieutenant-General Squires to form part of the United Kingdom Delegation in addition to any responsibilities they might have towards Australia at the Conference (Telegram No. 9).

9. The Australian Government agreed so far as Vice-Admiral Sir Ragnar Colvin was concerned, but were not able to spare the services of General Squires (Telegram No. 15). Accordingly, Major-General P. J. Mackesy has been sent from England as the Army representative. We have also been able to arrange for Air Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, on the conclusion of the work of the Mission which he accompanied to Australia and New Zealand, to stay on for the Conference.

10. The final composition of the United Kingdom Delegation was communicated to the New Zealand Government in a telegram dated the 20th March, 1939 (Telegram No. 20).

Instructions on Defence Questions for United Kingdom Delegation.

11. In view of the anxiety displayed by His Majesty's Government in New Zealand for information of an authoritative kind on the general strategical problems which would arise if the British Empire were involved in a major war, we thought it desirable to furnish them with a Memorandum on the subject. In this Memorandum we restated the strategical principles which would govern our action, and which were set out in the review of Imperial Defence which we prepared for the Imperial Conference, 1937 (C.I.D. Paper No. 1305-B). We

also suggested the methods in which New Zealand could best co-operate in Imperial Defence, both in peace and in war. Copies of this Memorandum have been sent to the New Zealand Government by the hand of Sir Harry Batterbee, the United Kingdom High Commissioner in New Zealand, and will be available to provide the strategical background for defence discussions at the forthcoming Conference. A copy of the Memorandum is attached as Annex II.

12. In addition to this Memorandum, the Service members of the United Kingdom Delegation have been provided with detailed instructions on each item of the Agenda by their own Departments, and general instructions have been issued by the Dominions Office to the High Commissioner in New Zealand.

(Signed) C. L. N. NEWALL.
GORT.
A. B. CUNNINGHAM.
D.C.N.S. (for C.N.S.).

*Richmond Terrace, S.W. 1,
March 31, 1939.*

ANNEX I.

Copies of Telegrams exchanged between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Governments of Australia and New Zealand.

No. 1.

Paraphrase Telegram sent December 12, 1938, to Government of New Zealand.

No. 179. Secret.

Reference paragraph 8 of your secret despatch of the 20th May.* Suggestion that representatives of the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand should meet at some suitable point to consider Pacific Islands questions has been considered by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. They agree that such a meeting would be desirable, and they feel that it would afford a useful opportunity for an exchange of views, not only on any defence questions arising in connection with the Pacific Islands, but also on possible action in relation to activities of United States in the Pacific and the suggested conference between His Majesty's Governments concerned and the United States Government to discuss the question of reciprocal air facilities. They will in due course communicate in more detail matters which they would propose to raise at any such meeting.

In order that they may consider the question of their representation, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would be glad to learn arrangements proposed by His Majesty's Government in New Zealand for the meeting. No indication is given of New Zealand Government's views as to best meeting place for proposed conference. For their part United Kingdom Government would be entirely agreeable to conference meeting in New Zealand if this commended itself to New Zealand and Commonwealth Governments.

No. 2.

Paraphrase Telegram sent December 24, 1938, to Government of New Zealand.

No. 190. Secret.

Pacific Islands. My telegram of 12th December, No. 179. Note is being sent by next air mail of questions which might be appropriate for consideration at proposed Conference of three Governments.

No. 3.

Paraphrase Telegram dated December 24, 1938, from Government of New Zealand.

No. 144. Secret.

Your telegram No. 179 of 12th December, Secret. Questions regarding proposed conference on Pacific Islands between representatives of the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand. Meetings of such a conference in New Zealand will be welcomed by His Majesty's Government in New Zealand, but they would now, in view of developments since the suggestion was first made, urgently propose extension of conference to cover defence in the Pacific in its widest aspects, sea, land and air. For this purpose the appointment would be welcomed of representatives from the United Kingdom, who would be fully competent to discuss and advise on these matters, and would be supplied with the latest information, particularly as to conditions upon which and times within which, on the outbreak of a major war, both in the East and West, naval reinforcements can be expected to arrive at Singapore, and correspondingly the scale of attack against which it would be prudent to provide.

† C.O.S. 271st and 278th Meetings.

* Annex to Enclosure to C.I.D. Paper No. 1455-B.

His Majesty's Government in New Zealand are convinced that it would be desirable that the proposed conference should be arranged at the earliest possible date, but this must largely depend upon the time necessary for the representatives of the United Kingdom to arrive in New Zealand.

His Majesty's Government in New Zealand would accordingly be grateful if they could be advised whether it would be acceptable to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to extend the scope of the conference as proposed, and, if so, when the arrival of the British representatives may be expected. Would suggest that the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific might with advantage be represented at the conference.

My succeeding telegram contains the gist of a report by the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff on a recent strategical survey of the Pacific Islands.

The proposals now made for extension of the scope of the conference are being notified to His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia by telegram, and that Government have been invited to agree to conference being held in New Zealand.

No. 4.

Paraphrase Telegram dated December 24, 1938, from Governor-General of New Zealand.

No. 145. Secret.

Reference my telegram No. 144 of to-day. I am asked by my Prime Minister to inform you that various Pacific Islands have recently been visited by New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, who have now rendered a report on the defences of Fiji and Tonga. Summary of their conclusions is as follows: *Begins:* (a) They emphasise the strategical importance of the Fiji and Tongan Groups. (b) The scale of attack to be expected in these groups has risen to one infantry brigade A. (c) Fiji Defence Force should be expanded from its present strength of 400 to a total of 1,300 all ranks. (d) Port of Suva should be defended by two naval 6-inch guns. (e) A Defence Force of one battalion should be formed in Tonga. (f) New Zealand should have a brigade group in readiness in war time to reinforce the Islands as required. (g) In Suva, local forces are required for minesweeping and for examination services. (h) New Zealand should be prepared to send aircraft to operate from these Islands in war. (i) Two landing grounds are required in Fiji, the necessary surveys and estimates having been made. (j) Two landing grounds are required in the Tonga Group; the surveys should now be made by a New Zealand aerodrome engineer. (k) Part of New Zealand's reserves of fuel, bombs and ammunition should be held in Fiji and part of the reserves of fuel in Tonga.

It must be made clear that His Majesty's Government in New Zealand have not yet approved recommendations (f), (h), (j) and (k).

Copy of the full report is being sent to you by despatch and copies are being sent to His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia and to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific. It is thought that this report will naturally be discussed at the forthcoming conference on defence matters.

No. 5.

Telegram dated January 11, 1939, from Government of Australia.

No. 5.

Following telegram has been sent to the Prime Minister of New Zealand:—

Begins: Your telegram of 22nd December.* My Government cordially concurs in the suggestion that conference should be held in New Zealand and will be prepared to send a delegation as soon as you can conveniently arrange the conference.

* See Telegram No. 144, Secret, from the Government of New Zealand (No. 3).

In the meantime I would like some amplification of what your Government has in mind about enlarging the scope of the conference and the extent of the subjects to be discussed. In other words, do you contemplate the conference devoted purely to defence matters or one which will cover the strategic situation in its widest aspect, embracing political, economic and geographic considerations?

You will appreciate that clear understanding of the subjects and their scope to be discussed is desirable beforehand in order that my Government can give consideration to personnel of the delegation and to the preparation of documentation. *Ends.*

No. 6.

Paraphrase Telegram sent January 16, 1939, to Government of New Zealand.

No. 12. Secret.

Reference your telegrams Nos. 144 and 145 of 24th December. For their part His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom agree that discussions at the proposed conference on the defence side should take the form proposed by His Majesty's Government in New Zealand. After receipt and consideration of Report of New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, they will be ready to put forward their observations on the various questions mentioned in your telegrams under reference.

As regards representation at the Conference, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom feel that, if subjects to be discussed on the defence side are to be of the wide nature suggested, it would be very difficult to decide on nature of representation until they have received the Report of the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff. From your telegram of 4th January No. 1,* it is observed that this will not arrive until 3rd February, and it is feared that if defence discussions at the Conference were to open before about middle of April there would not be time for adequate study of Report and for framing instructions for guidance of United Kingdom representatives.

It would be the hope of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, and doubtless of His Majesty's Government in New Zealand also, that opening of conference should not be too long delayed, especially in relation to questions connected with United States activities in the Pacific, in view of possibility of some early action on the part of the United States.

Having regard, however, to position as described above as regards representation on the defence side and also to difficulty of attendance for lengthy period of High Commissioner for Western Pacific (whom we should like, if feasible, to appoint as one of our representatives), it would be very difficult to arrange adequate United Kingdom representation if Conference were held earlier than middle of April.

His Majesty's Government in United Kingdom would, however, hope that Conference could meet as soon as possible thereafter. If so, they would propose that their representatives at the Conference, in addition to any special defence representatives who might be appointed after study of Report of New Zealand Chiefs of Staffs, should be the High Commissioner in New Zealand for His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, and the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific (or a representative).

His Majesty's Government in New Zealand will no doubt wish to place themselves in touch with High Commissioner for the Western Pacific (to whom substance of this telegram is being communicated) and with His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia, and we should be glad to learn as soon as may be convenient arrangements which they contemplate for meeting of conference as a result of such discussion.

* Not circulated.

No. 7.

Paraphrase Telegram dated January 22, 1939, from Governor-General of New Zealand.

No. 9. Secret.

Your secret telegram No. 12 of 16th January. My Prime Minister desires me to inform you that, so far as New Zealand Chiefs of Staff report is concerned, it deals with a strategic survey of certain Pacific Islands only, and report is adequately summarised in my secret telegram of 24th December, No. 145. At this stage His Majesty's Government in New Zealand would like to set out more precisely the points which they suggest should be discussed at the Conference, namely:—

(a) Possible lines of action by enemy Powers against Empire interests in the South-West Pacific in the period before the arrival of naval reinforcements, including (i) operations to capture bases in the Western Pacific; (ii) nature and scale of possible operations against Empire trade; (iii) nature and scale of possible operations against Australian and New Zealand territory.

(b) Measures necessary to defend (i) Pacific Islands and Mandated Territories, notably Fiji, Tonga, New Hebrides, Solomon Islands; (ii) ships trading with United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia; (iii) Australian and New Zealand territories.

(c) Most effective means of co-operation with the United Kingdom in the defence of British Commonwealth after providing for security in the South-Western Pacific, including schemes for mutual reinforcement.

(d) Co-ordination of defence policy in peace and war.

(e) Sources of supplies of equipment after the outbreak of war.

(f) Scales of reserves of supplies, including fuel and equipment.

(g) Possible effect of German demand for the return of Mandated Territories.

(h) Economic aspects of war, including probable effect on trade and shipping.

(j) Policy in relation to Trans-Pacific Air route and the United States activities in the Pacific.

This agenda is dependent only in a small degree on report of the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, which affects point (b) above only. His Majesty's Government in New Zealand had hoped that it would be possible to hold the conference at latest by mid-March, and they are somewhat disturbed at the proposal of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom not to hold it before the middle of April. His Majesty's Government in New Zealand still hope this will be possible, and, in view of relatively small importance of report of New Zealand Staff Chiefs already referred to, suggest that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom may be able to decide on their representations forthwith and arrange for the arrival of their representatives by the middle of March.

The substance of this telegram is being repeated to the High Commissioner for Western Pacific and to His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia.

No. 8.

Paraphrase Telegram sent February 1, 1939, to Government of New Zealand.

No. 17. Secret.

Reference your telegram No. 9 of the 22nd January. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom agree that Conference should meet by the middle of March if possible or as soon as may be practicable thereafter. They are endeavouring to arrange for United Kingdom Service representatives to be available at that time and further telegram will be sent as to this as soon as possible.

As regards agenda of Conference on the defence side, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom fully recognise importance of the various

matters referred to in your telegram. It will be appreciated, however, that adequate consideration of some of the topics mentioned, such as those set out under (d), (g) and (h) in your telegram, would call for a meeting more in the nature of an Imperial Conference in which representatives of other Dominions and India might wish to participate. It is assumed that on such topics the task of the present Conference will be merely exploratory with a view to drawing up reports for further consideration by the Governments concerned. This would not apply to immediate practical problems such as those mentioned under (a), (b) and (c), which it is thought could be fully discussed at the Conference with a view to reaching definite conclusions.

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom agree that (j) should be included in Agenda.

No. 9.

Paraphrase Telegram sent February 2, 1939, to the United Kingdom High Commissioner in the Commonwealth of Australia.

No. 16. Secret.

Reference telegram from Commonwealth Government of 11th January, No. 5.* Telegram, text of which is as follows, has been received from His Majesty's Government in New Zealand:—

Begins: My Prime Minister desires me to inform you that, so far as New Zealand Chiefs of Staff report is concerned, it deals with a strategic survey of certain Pacific Islands only, and report is adequately summarised in my secret telegram of 24th December, No. 145. At this stage His Majesty's Government in New Zealand would like to set out more precisely the points which they suggest should be discussed at the conference, namely:—

(a) Possible lines of action by enemy Powers against Empire interests in the South-West Pacific in the period before the arrival of naval reinforcements, including (i) operations to capture bases in the Western Pacific; (ii) nature and scale of possible operations against Empire trade; (iii) nature and scale of possible operations against Australian and New Zealand territory.

(b) Measures necessary to defend (i) Pacific Islands and mandated territories, notably Fiji, Tonga, New Hebrides, Solomon Islands; (ii) ships trading with United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia; (iii) Australian and New Zealand territories.

(c) Most effective means of co-operation with the United Kingdom in the defence of British Commonwealth after providing for security in the South-Western Pacific, including schemes for mutual reinforcement.

(d) Co-ordination of defence policy in peace and war.

(e) Sources of supplies of equipment after the outbreak of war.

(f) Scales of reserves of supplies, including fuel and equipment.

(g) Possible effect of German demand for the return of Mandated Territories.

(h) Economic aspects of war, including probable effect on trade and shipping.

(j) Policy in relation to Trans-Pacific air route and the United States activities in the Pacific.

This agenda is dependent only in a small degree on report of the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, which affects point (b) above only. His Majesty's Government in New Zealand had hoped that it would be possible to hold the conference at latest by mid-March, and they are somewhat disturbed at the proposal of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom not to hold it before the middle of April. His Majesty's Government in New Zealand still hope this will be possible, and, in view of relatively small importance of report of New Zealand Staff Chiefs already referred to, suggest that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom may be able to decide on their representations forthwith and arrange for the arrival of their representatives by the middle of March.

* Telegram No. 5.

The substance of this telegram is being repeated to the High Commissioner for Western Pacific and to His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia. *Ends.*

Following reply has been sent:—

Text begins: His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom agree that conference should meet by the middle of March if possible or as soon as may be practicable thereafter. They are endeavouring to arrange for United Kingdom Service representatives to be available at that time and further telegram will be sent as to this as soon as possible.

As regards agenda of conference on the defence side, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom fully recognise importance of the various matters referred to in your telegram. It will be appreciated, however, that adequate consideration of some of the topics mentioned, such as those set out under (d), (g) and (h) in your telegram, would call for a meeting more in the nature of an Imperial Conference, in which representatives of other Dominions and India might wish to participate. It is assumed that on such topics the task of the present conference will be merely exploratory, with a view to drawing up reports for further consideration by the Governments concerned. This would not apply to immediate practical problems such as those mentioned under (a), (b) and (c), which it is thought could be fully discussed at the conference with a view to reaching definite conclusions. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom agree that (j) should be included in agenda. *Text ends.*

If discussions at the conference are to be of the nature suggested it is clear that attendance of senior officers of the three defence services will be necessary, and if conference is to open in March it would be advisable that officers at present in the neighbourhood of New Zealand should be selected. It is thought, therefore, that most suitable arrangement would be for Sir Ragnar Colvin and Lieutenant-General Squires to be the Naval and Military Service representatives on behalf of United Kingdom Government, provided that the Commonwealth Government were willing that they should so act in addition to any duties which they may be performing in relation to the conference for the Commonwealth Government.

Please approach Commonwealth Government accordingly and inform us as soon as possible whether they have any objection.

For your own information, as regards Royal Air Force representation, position is that consideration is being given to the question whether it would be possible for Sir Arthur Longmore to be released from his duties in connection with Aircraft Mission to Australia in order to take part in conference in New Zealand in latter part of March. View of Government here as regards conference generally is that it is desirable that, as far as possible, it should be confined to immediate problems.

No. 10.

Paraphrase Telegram dated February 15, 1939, from the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia.

No. 18. Telegram as follows has been sent to the New Zealand Government:—

Text begins: Secret. Proposal contained in your telegram* of 24th January has been given full consideration. While being in full agreement concerning the holding of a Conference it would appear to me that the proposed Agenda implies a full scale conference. It has been shown by past experience that many of the matters listed could be properly discussed only in London at an Imperial Conference, where the British Cabinet and Chief of the Staff are located. It is also observed that some of the subjects were discussed at the 1937 Imperial Conference and that Committee of Imperial Defence Paper or the Report of Chief of Staff Sub-Committee of recent date are available on most questions. I am sure you will

* See Telegram No. 9, Secret, from the Governor-General, New Zealand (No. 7).

agree with me that in such a wide range of important subjects difficulties in achieving any great progress will be experienced without the presence of the United Kingdom Ministers and Chief of Staff. As you will be aware the Senior Defence Officers in Australia are hard pressed with work on their programme and we should like to have a fuller understanding of what is proposed than the list of items for discussion. It would be inconvenient to lose the services of these officers while they were preparing extensive data, in addition to the time spent in travelling to and from New Zealand.

As the success of the Conference is dependent upon the adequacy of the preliminary examination of the proposals, may I suggest that you should as a first stage circulate documentation and the proposals for the information of the United Kingdom-Australian Governments. As you know the principle of documentation and its prior circulation is observed by the United Kingdom Government. The date of the Conference could be fixed after the documents have been examined by all concerned.

Copy of this telegram is being sent to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. *Text ends.*

No. 11.

Paraphrase Telegram dated February 16, 1939, from Governor-General of New Zealand.

No. 21. Secret.

Reference your secret telegram of 1st February, No. 17. His Majesty's Government in New Zealand agree that discussion of the topics set out under (d), (g) and (h) of my telegram No. 9 of 22nd January is merely exploratory. No reply has yet been received from His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia regarding the date of the Conference or Agenda. His Majesty's Government in New Zealand note with pleasure that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom are endeavouring to facilitate meeting of Conference in the latter half of March.

No. 12.

Paraphrase Telegram dated February 17, 1939, from Governor-General of New Zealand.

No. 23. Secret.

I am asked by my Prime Minister to communicate to you text of following telegram which he has addressed to the Prime Minister of Commonwealth of Australia to-day:—

Telegram begins: Secret. Reference your telegram of 15th February,* I appreciate your apprehension of the difficulties that may militate against a successful Defence Conference at an early date. I fully realise the importance and difficulties of some of the questions which it is proposed to discuss, and I recognise the fact that the defence officers in Australia are very much pressed, as is also the case in New Zealand. At the same time I feel that since the Pacific defence matters were discussed at the Imperial Conference, the position has changed so radically and the pressure of events is so ominous that, with a view to making practical recommendations to the Governments concerned rather than exploring the matters of high policy, it is highly desirable that the proposed Conference should be held at the earliest possible moment. For example, paragraphs (a) and (b) of the proposed Agenda, while couched in very wide terms, would, in fact, we contemplate, be interpreted as a practical investigation, firstly, of the time during which Australia and New Zealand may expect to be without assistance from naval reinforcements from the United Kingdom, secondly, the scale and direction of attack that may be contemplated during that period, and

* See Telegram No. 18 from the Commonwealth of Australia (No. 10).

thirdly, the steps which in combination between the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand it would be most desirable to take to meet this eventuality. As in New Zealand, it may well be in Australia that plans for such a contingency have already been evolved, but the New Zealand Government are impressed with the desirability of collaborating in the Pacific defence measures to the utmost extent possible. Similar comments apply to other paragraphs of the proposed agenda. It has always been the intention of the New Zealand Government to provide papers setting out the New Zealand point of view on the subjects of the Agenda which they have proposed, and it is hoped that this work which is already in preparation will be completed in time to allow of their delivery to the Australian delegates before their departure for New Zealand. I trust that, in all the circumstances, you will be able to reconsider the matter and agree to a meeting of the Conference at the earliest date convenient to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. A copy of this message has been repeated to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. *Telegram ends.*

No. 13.

Paraphrase Telegram sent February 20, 1939, to Government of the Commonwealth of Australia.

No. 13. Secret

Reference your telegram of 15th February, No. 18. Prime Minister of New Zealand has repeated to us his telegram to you of 17th February. His Majesty's Government in New Zealand had already been informed of our view that adequate consideration of some of the topics mentioned in their telegram of 22nd January would call for a meeting more in the nature of an Imperial Conference and that on such topics it was assumed that task of the present Conference would be merely exploratory with a view to drawing up reports for further consideration by Governments. We added that this would not apply to immediate practical problems which it was thought could be fully discussed at the Conference with a view to reaching definite conclusions.

We feel that, if defence discussions on this basis could take place without undue delay there would be considerable advantage. Moreover, we are anxious to discuss as soon as possible with His Majesty's Governments in Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand other questions relating to Pacific Islands, namely, action in regard to United States claims and civil aviation problems. It would, therefore, be convenient from our point of view if opening of Conference were not deferred beyond latter part of March. This would also be suitable time for attendance of High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, whom we should like to be one of our representatives at the Conference.

We are repeating this telegram to New Zealand, No. 27.

No. 14.

Paraphrase Telegram, dated February 28, from Government of the Commonwealth of Australia.

No. 21. Secret.

The following is text of telegram which has been sent to the Prime Minister of New Zealand:—

Telegram begins: 17th February. Secret: Proposed Defence Conference. Advice has been received that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will be represented by Service Officers on defence matters. His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia is agreeable to participate on this basis. As was, however, pointed out in my telegram of 15th February,* discussion on several matters in the agenda could only proceed

* No. 10.

between the Ministers of the Governments concerned. Commonwealth Government are therefore of opinion that Items (c), (d) and (h) are matters that cannot be dealt with by a conference of Service representatives, and that discussion on these items must necessarily be exploratory only with a view to drawing up a report for further consideration by the Governments concerned. Attendance of a Commonwealth Minister would be impracticable and, so far as Australia is concerned, discussion will be on purely defence matters. In so far as the Defence Conference is concerned, therefore, Australian representatives will be empowered to discuss only the technical aspect of the Service plans, and it is noted that the United Kingdom Government's telegram of 2nd February† also takes this view. Owing to pressure of work, to which my telegram of 15th February referred, and departure of the Chief of Air Force Staff for England this month, the Australian representation will be the Chief of Naval Staff and Senior Officers of the Army and Air Force. We will notify full list later. Please advise date proposed and, in accordance with request of 15th February, forward, for examination in advance of the Delegation, (?) documentation on items in the agenda. *Telegram ends.*

† Telegram No. 17, dated February 1, 1939 (No. 8).

No. 15.

Paraphrase Telegram dated February 28, 1939, from the United Kingdom High Commissioner in the Commonwealth of Australia.

No. 33. Secret.

Your telegram No. 34 of the 25th February: Pacific Defence Conference.

I have received oral information that the Cabinet decided yesterday in Sydney that they are prepared to release Colvin as representative of the United Kingdom as well as of the Commonwealth, but that they cannot release Squires, since the Government is at present considering his report. Telegrams from the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia to the United Kingdom and New Zealand Governments which, *inter alia*, convey this decision are awaiting final approval of the Cabinet at to-day's meeting.

No. 16.

Telegram dated March 2, 1939, from the Governor-General of New Zealand.

No. 27. Secret.

Your telegram of 20th February No. 27.* My Ministers state that His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia have now agreed to the holding of the proposed Defence Conference at an early date, subject to the reservation that consideration of Items (c), (d) and (h) of the Agenda should be explanatory only.

His Majesty's Government in New Zealand have replied concurring with the suggestion, and the date of the Conference now depends entirely upon the time within which the United Kingdom Representative(s) can arrive. My Ministers would be grateful for advice as to the date of arrival at earliest possible convenience, in order that the date of the Conference may be fixed and His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia and the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific advised accordingly.

It would be appreciated by my Ministers if, as soon as possible, they could be supplied with full list of names of the British Delegation, who will, they trust, regard themselves as guests of the Government while they are in the Dominion.

Ministers would also be glad if they could be advised of the itinerary of the British Delegation in order that the papers on the Agenda (which it is hoped will be completed next week) may be despatched by safe hands to reach them *en route*.

It is assumed that the British Delegation will be in a position to discuss fully the subjects referred to in the first paragraph of my secret telegram of the 24th December last, No. 144.†

* Telegram No. 13.

† Telegram No. 3.

No. 17.

*Paraphrase Telegram sent March 8, 1939, to United Kingdom
High Commissioner in Commonwealth of Australia.*

IMMEDIATE. No. 39.

Your telegram of 3rd March, No. 35. We are grateful to His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia for their agreement to make services of Colvin available as United Kingdom representative at Conference. Reasons for which they feel unable to release Squires are appreciated here, but, in view of his special qualifications and after consideration of the position, we feel that it would be very difficult to find any other Army officer so suitable for the purpose. If (as seems probable) Conference cannot now be held at earliest before the end of March, would it be possible to reconsider position as regards sparing Squires? We hope that this may be feasible, and should be grateful for very early reply, since New Zealand Government has informed us that they are deferring fixing date of meeting of Conference pending information as to date of arrival of United Kingdom representatives.

No. 18.

*Paraphrase Telegram dated March 15, 1939, from United Kingdom
High Commissioner in Commonwealth of Australia.*

IMMEDIATE. No. 44.

Your telegram No. 47 of the 14th March. The Minister of Defence has now informed me verbally that Squires is continuously required here for consultation on Army reorganisation, and he very much regrets that it is not possible to spare him for the Conference.

No. 19.

*Paraphrase Telegram dated March 18, 1939, from United Kingdom
High Commissioner in New Zealand.*

IMMEDIATE. No. 47.

His Majesty's Government in New Zealand entirely appreciate Colvin's qualifications, but great disappointment has been expressed. Both the Commonwealth and United Kingdom will be represented by the same naval delegate. If it is at all possible to send from London a Senior Naval Officer to assist Colvin, I would strongly urge that in the interests of good atmosphere for the proceedings this should be considered very seriously. If the suggestion is thought worth acceptance, effect on the terms of the reply suggested in paragraph 1 of my immediately following telegram will no doubt be borne in mind.

Addressed to Dominions Office, No. 47. Repeated to the United Kingdom High Commissioner in the Commonwealth of Australia, No. 10, Secret.

Further telegram follows.

No. 20.

Paraphrase Telegram sent March 20, 1939, to the Government of New Zealand.

IMPORTANT. No. 39. Secret.

Reference your telegram of 2nd March, No. 27.* Following have been appointed by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom as their representatives at forthcoming Pacific Conference: High Commissioner in New

* Telegram No. 16.

Zealand for His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, Vice-Admiral Sir Ragnar Colvin; Major-General P. J. Mackesy; Air Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore. Major-General Mackesy will be accompanied by Captain W. D. Mc.N. Graham.

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom are very grateful to His Majesty's Government in New Zealand for their offer of hospitality to United Kingdom delegates, which they gladly accept.

Mackesy and Graham are due to leave London 25th March by air for Sydney, and to leave Sydney 8th April by steamship *Wanganella*. Longmore is expected to arrive in New Zealand about 3rd April. As regards other United Kingdom representatives, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have not precise information as to dates of arrival in New Zealand, but they assume that His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia will supply date in case of Colvin, and that United Kingdom High Commissioner in New Zealand will have particulars in case of Luke.

Importance to New Zealand of matters referred to in last paragraph of your telegram fully appreciated by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, who will endeavour to supply all information practicable to His Majesty's Government in New Zealand.

No. 21.

*Paraphrase Telegram sent March 20, 1939, to United Kingdom
High Commissioner in New Zealand.*

IMMEDIATE. No. 15. Secret.

Reference your telegram of 18th March, No. 47.* Matter has been at once taken up with Admiralty, who are considering whether action is possible, though you will appreciate that there may be considerable difficulty in sending suitable officer in the present international situation.

* Telegram No. 19.

No. 22.

*Paraphrase Telegram sent March 23, 1939, to the United Kingdom
High Commissioner in New Zealand.*

No. 17. Secret.

Reference your telegram of 18th March, No. 47.* Sympathetic consideration has been given by Admiralty to views of New Zealand Government, but they are very sorry that it is not possible in present circumstances to spare a staff officer who is engaged at present on war plans; and that there is no other senior naval officer available who has lately been in touch with such plans. New Zealand Government can, however, rest assured that Vice-Admiral Colvin will be in a position to represent Admiralty views thoroughly well, and Admiralty observe, moreover, that Commodore Horan is well able to offer a second opinion, if any should be required, from the general naval strategical point of view, since before going out to New Zealand he made a study of the whole problem of naval strategy in the Pacific.

* Telegram No. 19.

ANNEX II.

[C.O.S. 832.]

COMMITTEE OF IMPERIAL DEFENCE.

Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee.

NEW ZEALAND CO-OPERATION IN IMPERIAL DEFENCE.

(Previous Paper No. C.O.S. 831.)

Memorandum.

IN a despatch dated the 20th May, 1938, on the subject of projected air routes across the Pacific Ocean, the Governor-General of New Zealand made the suggestion* that a conference between representatives of Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand might be assembled to discuss Pacific Island matters.

2. Since that date various communications have passed between the three Governments on the subject of this conference, and, in particular, certain telegrams have been received from the New Zealand Government outlining recent conclusions by the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff (New Zealand telegram No. 145, dated the 24th December, 1938)† and making proposals for a wide agenda on defence matters for the conference (New Zealand telegram No. 9 dated the 22nd January, 1939).‡

3. Some of the items included in the list in the above telegram are suitable for ministerial discussion; others are of such wide implication that they could only be effectively dealt with at a conference at which representatives of the other Dominions and of India were present. Consequently, we are of opinion that it will not be possible for a conference, at which the United Kingdom representatives would be confined to those who can be made available by the middle of March, to deal with the whole range of subjects by the Government of New Zealand. Nevertheless, we fully appreciate the value of an early conference, on the understanding that it will deal with as much of the agenda as it finds itself competent to discuss, reserving the remainder for report to the Governments concerned.

In order that the New Zealand Government may be in possession of an up-to-date statement, not only of our views on the general strategical situation, but also on the contribution which New Zealand might find herself able to make to Imperial Defence, we have prepared the present memorandum. It is divided into two parts dealing respectively with these two aspects of the problem.

PART I.—IMPERIAL DEFENCE, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NEW ZEALAND.

4. In the present state of world affairs we have to face the possibilities of a strategic situation in which the British Empire, in alliance with France, while at war in Europe, would also have to contend with the hostility of Japan. In the worst case we might be engaged simultaneously with Germany, Italy and Japan.

5. Some indication of the gravity of such a situation can be obtained by recalling the position in 1914, and the events of the war which followed. Germany calculated that, having regard to the strength of the Triple Alliance, and to the improbability of British intervention, her forces would be adequate to enable her to conquer France. In the event we intervened against her, and were supported by Russia and Japan, and after a brief interval by Italy, and ultimately by the United States of America. In spite of this there were times during the war when the Germans came within measurable distance of obtaining peace on favourable terms.

6. Now Japan, together with an Italy far more powerful than in 1914, might be against us instead of against Germany. A new factor would be that,

* Paragraph 8 of Annex 15, Enclosure to C.I.D. Paper No. 1455-B.

† Enclosure No. 1.

‡ Enclosure No. 2.

for the first time in history, the home resources of the belligerents would be open to air attack upon a large scale. The effectiveness of such attack, and of the defensive measures designed to meet it, can only be determined as the result of war experience.

7. Our policy for the defence of the Empire has been stated* as follows:—

“The security of the United Kingdom and the security of Singapore would be the keystones on which the survival of the British Commonwealth of Nations would depend A British Fleet would have to proceed to the Far East leaving sufficient strength in home waters to neutralise the German Fleet We could rely on France to neutralise the Italian fleet in the Mediterranean, to some extent, and to maintain command of the Western Mediterranean.”

8. At the threat of war with Germany and Italy, there are certain immediate steps which must be taken in the Far East. In particular, as the security of Singapore is the vital factor in our strategic position in the Far East, that base must be reinforced without delay by a brigade from India, and by Air Forces from India and Iraq, to bring the garrison up to war establishment. Detailed plans are maintained for these movements, the ships of the China Fleet providing the necessary protection for the transports in the Bay of Bengal. The timely arrival of these reinforcements should ensure that the fortress will hold out against any scale of seaborne Japanese attack, pending the arrival of the British Fleet.

9. If Japan then intervened on the side of our enemies it would, as stated above, be imperative to send a British Fleet to the Far East where it would give cover to Australia, New Zealand, India and South Africa, and secure our position in the Indian Ocean, protecting the vital sea communications through that area to Egypt and the Middle East from all parts of the Empire.

10. With the despatch of a Fleet to the Far East, the Mediterranean would be almost denuded of British naval forces, and Italy would obtain control of sea communications in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean, subject to the possibilities of French naval action. So long, however, as we could retain our position in Egypt, we should control the Suez Canal. Egypt could be reinforced and supplied through the Red Sea and by the overland routes from Basra and Mombasa, and a fleet in the Far East would give cover to these communications from Japanese interruption which could not be given by a Fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean.

11. The Naval position must be largely governed by the situation at the time when war with Japan breaks out, and the action which our own and the naval forces of our enemies in Europe have taken up to that time. In the worst case, Japan might enter the war before our naval resources had been fully developed, and when German and Italian naval forces had started to attack our trade in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, and possibly elsewhere. Our naval forces might be operating at strength in the Atlantic, but considerably dispersed. Some French capital ships might be assisting in these operations, while a proportion of the allied forces would be in the Mediterranean. In these circumstances it could not be guaranteed that the whole of the Fleet destined for the Far East could be despatched immediately. This would depend upon the progress of our operations to re-establish control of communications in the Atlantic, and the necessary redistribution of naval forces.

12. To threaten the security of any Dominion or of India, through invasion, Japan would require the control of sea communications in the Pacific or Indian Oceans for an indefinite period. Japan is, in the highest degree, unlikely to contemplate any operations of this nature in view of the great distances involved and the threat of the arrival of a British Fleet in far eastern waters. Raids against sea communications in the Indian Ocean and raids against ports by Japanese naval forces are always a possibility, particularly before the fleet arrives. To guard against raids on ports, reliance must be placed on local resources for immediate protection, while ultimate security is obtained by naval operations to destroy the raiders.

* C.I.D. Paper No. 1305-B.

13. Without unduly restricting her campaign in China, Japan could detach strong forces for an attack on Hong Kong. It is almost certain that this attack would be made, and it might be the first intimation we should receive that Japan had decided to enter the war on the side of Germany and Italy. While she remains in military occupation of the Canton area, she will be particularly well placed for starting such an attack.

14. Were she not so heavily involved in China, Japan might attempt a "coup de main" or deliberate attack with the object of capturing Singapore. On the other hand, she might always attempt to destroy the docking and repair facilities of the base by seaborne air raids, and by sabotage. The arrival of the reinforcements from India and Iraq should make Singapore secure.

15. It is also possible that Japan might attempt operations designed to capture North Borneo to obtain oil and to enable her to establish advanced bases for the attack on Singapore; this would involve her in keeping strong naval forces in the South China Seas, at a distance from her main bases. Once a British fleet had arrived it is unlikely that the Japanese would be able to maintain such a position unless they were prepared to fight a fleet action under conditions which would be strategically advantageous to us.

16. Furthermore, in undertaking any overseas operations outside China Japan would require to make use of a considerable tonnage of mercantile shipping, especially for operations involving long distances. This would probably restrict the size of the force which could be despatched and maintained to moderate dimensions. Finally, any likelihood of war with the U.S.S.R. would probably deter her from overseas commitments of any magnitude.

17. The scale of attack which Japan could develop against New Zealand would depend on two factors:—

- (1) Her ability to develop advanced naval and air bases within striking distance of New Zealand.
- (2) The number and types of ships and aircraft which she could spare for such operations.

18. If Japan was determined, notwithstanding the distance and vulnerability of her long line of communication to raids by cruiser forces, to establish advanced bases in New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, New Hebrides or even Fiji, immediately she entered the war, it would be difficult to stop her.

19. With regard to the forces which Japan would be likely to spare for such operations, she would certainly hesitate to disperse her main naval forces in view of the threat of the arrival of the British Fleet at Singapore. Uncertainty as to the attitude of U.S.A. and U.S.S.R., coupled with her probable pre-occupation in China for some time to come, make it unlikely that she would despatch large air forces overseas, particularly when the advanced bases would be outside air striking distance of the objective, and with insecure sea communications for supplies.

20. With the arrival of the British Main Fleet in the Far East these communications could be subjected to an increased degree of interruption. In fact, the Japanese would then find very great difficulty in maintaining their position in the Islands, and the threat to New Zealand would fade.

Conclusion.

21. The British Empire allied to France might, in the worst case, have to contend simultaneously with Germany, Italy and Japan and we should be gravely threatened in Europe, the Mediterranean and Far East. Our broad strategic policy would be to hold on to key positions, while developing our latent strength. The U.S.A. and perhaps U.S.S.R. might come to our aid, in which case our situation would be greatly improved.

22. A British Fleet would have to be sent to the Far East to give cover to New Zealand, Australia, our Eastern possessions and to communications in the Indian Ocean, including those to Egypt and the Middle East, while sufficient naval strength would be retained in home waters to contain the German Fleet. We should have to depend on the French Fleet to restrict Italian naval action in the Mediterranean.

23. It will thus be seen that no change has occurred to affect the considerations which governed the undertaking given at the Imperial Conference in 1937, that in the event of war with Japan, we should send a Fleet to Eastern waters irrespective of the situation elsewhere.

PART II.—NEW ZEALAND CO-OPERATION IN IMPERIAL DEFENCE.

24. It will be realised that the burden of providing the necessary forces for Home Defence, for Egypt and the Middle East, and for the maintenance of Imperial communications, in addition to building and maintaining a Fleet of sufficient strength to oppose Germany, Italy and Japan simultaneously is a very heavy one. The greatest importance is therefore attached to the assistance which can be rendered by the Dominions. We consider, therefore, in this part of our report, the manner in which New Zealand might be able to co-operate further in Imperial Defence in peace and in war, at sea, on land, and in the air.

General Considerations.

25. We are not in a position to assess New Zealand's financial resources, and we have not therefore considered the financial aspect of our proposals.

26. In August 1937, when we last considered Defence Expenditure in New Zealand* at the request of the New Zealand Government, we defined her Defence Policy as follows:—

“The security of New Zealand depends ultimately on the command of sea communications to New Zealand by the British Fleet. So long as an adequate British Fleet is in being the danger of the invasion of New Zealand is very remote. The provision of sea power for the defence of seaborne trade simultaneously furnishes a deterrent against seaborne raids. As adequate naval strength is of fundamental importance to Empire and New Zealand defence, the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy should be maintained at a strength which is an effective and fair contribution to Empire Naval Defence.

“The circumstances of a major war may be such that the defence of New Zealand's interests may be found to lie outside New Zealand altogether, and her ability to co-operate on land or in the air in the Defence of the Empire may prove in the outcome the most effective measure she can take for her own security, since the defeat of the United Kingdom would mean the break-up of the British Empire.”

27. We see no reason to modify the above principles which we consider still hold good.

28. The forms which, we suggest, further co-operation by New Zealand in Imperial Defence might take are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Navy.

In time of peace.

29. If New Zealand could meet the cost of manning and maintaining a third cruiser and two escort vessels, this would represent a valuable contribution to Imperial Defence. An addition to defence expenditure in this form would fit into the existing organisation for administrative and maintenance purposes, such as personnel, refits and repairs, fuel, stores and ammunition, without major additions to overhead cost.

30. It would also be very desirable that the New Zealand Government should provide asdic sets, together with the necessary facilities for training personnel for submarine detection, for which purpose a trawler fitted for A/S would be needed.

31. It is recommended that merchant vessels on the New Zealand register should be stiffened in time of peace, to enable them quickly to mount a defensive armament in time of war. Particulars of the scheme in the United Kingdom have been given to the New Zealand authorities.

* Paper No. C.O.S. 609.

32. While it is understood that some officers of the two big New Zealand shipping companies have been through the Defence Course for officers of the Mercantile Marine in the United Kingdom, it is desired to recommend to the attention of the New Zealand authorities the need for sending all Merchant Navy Officers through this course. The lectures have been supplied to New Zealand.

In time of War.

33. In addition to placing the New Zealand Division under the orders of the Admiralty, New Zealand has hitherto agreed to provide and maintain two armed merchant cruisers for trade protection duties in time of war, including the manning, in so far as her personnel resources will allow. This matter has recently been under discussion in correspondence in connection with the employment of these ships, and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have expressed the hope that His Majesty's Government in New Zealand will continue to accept full responsibility for this commitment.

Army.

In time of peace.

34. The strength of our overseas garrisons is based on the principle that, wherever sea communications are liable to interruption by sea, land or air, the garrison should be maintained in peace at a strength adequate for defence at the outbreak of war. Alternatively, the necessary reserve should be held in the neighbourhood available to reinforce at short notice. It will be obvious that the maintenance of overseas garrisons has of late become a much heavier commitment owing to the increased liability of sea communications to attack by hostile submarines and aircraft.

35. In order that the Government of New Zealand may judge whether this would be a suitable field for contribution towards Imperial Defence, we set out for their consideration the present position of certain garrisons which lie on the main line of Imperial communications to the Far East, which is, of course, of vital importance to New Zealand.

36. The principal bases on this line are Hong Kong, Penang, Singapore and Trincomali. In view of the situation created by the present Sino-Japanese hostilities, we do not think it a suitable time to suggest the stationing of New Zealand troops at Hong Kong. The garrison at Penang is formed by mixed units of British, Indian and Malays, and no additional units are required.

37. At Singapore the peace garrison is insufficient for war requirements and relies on early reinforcement by an infantry brigade group from India. The safe arrival of this force is dependent on the security, at the time, of sea communications in the Bay of Bengal.

38. The defences are also deficient of one of the three anti-aircraft regiments which have been approved. Any addition, therefore, which New Zealand found it possible to make to the peace-time garrison would add appreciably to the security of the base.

39. The Government of New Zealand might wish to consider, as an alternative, the relief of existing British units at Singapore. This form of assistance could be given without the delays inseparable from the construction of new barracks, which would be required if the strength of the garrison were to be increased. His Majesty's Government would in this event still have to maintain the existing plan for the reinforcement of the base in time of emergency, but British personnel would be set free for use in other overseas bases. This solution would admit of New Zealand troops taking over existing armament as well as barracks. We suggest that units for which New Zealand troops might provide personnel in whole or in part are:—

- (a) One British anti-aircraft regiment R.A. (25 officers and 589 other ranks).
- (b) The Changi Fire Command R.A. (40 officers and 782 other ranks).

(a) would provide a more independent rôle than (b).

40. Any contribution to the garrison of Singapore would entail a mixed garrison of British, New Zealanders and native troops. At Trincomali, on the other hand, New Zealand troops might be able to find the complete regular garrison, which at present consists of one 9·2-inch battery, one 6-inch battery and 3 Anti-Aircraft batteries. The war establishment of these units, when fully equipped, will amount to an approximate total of 27 officers and 700 other ranks, Royal Artillery.

41. If the Government of New Zealand had in mind the provision of infantry units, the question of periodical reliefs might necessitate the formation of regular units in New Zealand for draft finding and training of the troops: this would materially increase the cost of the maintenance of overseas infantry units. Although there are no regular infantry units in New Zealand, there is a regular artillery cadre which could perhaps be expanded for service overseas.

42. In any arrangement on the above lines which might be made, consideration will have to be given to the special problem raised by the possibility of the calling out of New Zealand troops in aid of the civil power.

In Time of War.

43. New Zealand has already undertaken an oversea commitment. Since August 1930 she has been prepared to despatch a garrison of two platoons and two machine guns to Fanning Island at the request of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. Recently it was accepted that the force should be increased to one company.

In a telegram from the New Zealand Government, No. 145 of the 24th December, 1938, the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff recommend that a Brigade Group should be held in readiness by New Zealand for use as required in war in the Pacific Islands. This would be a valuable contribution.

44. Once New Zealand is involved in war, the best means by which her land forces can co-operate is by the formation of a division, as in 1914-18, and its eventual despatch for operations overseas wherever it can be employed most usefully. We suggest that in peace time the New Zealand army should be organised with this rôle in view, so that the division could be despatched in as short a time as possible.

Air.

In time of peace.

45. The fundamental problem of Imperial Defence from the air point of view is how to meet the threat to the United Kingdom from potential enemies in Europe. As we have remarked in paragraph 26 above, the security of New Zealand depends upon the maintenance in being of the British Fleet, but that itself presumes the security of the British Isles against all forms of attack.

At the present time we are fully occupied in developing from our own resources an adequate counter to the heavy scale of air attack with which the United Kingdom is threatened. The most urgent necessity, therefore, is to strengthen our air power at home.

46. It is not suggested that a direct contribution to the air defence of Great Britain, in the form of New Zealand squadrons maintained in England in peace, is at present a practical proposition. It is possible that, as an outcome of the conference which is to be held on the Pacific Islands, the New Zealand Government may undertake further air commitments in peace in the Islands. If the New Zealand Government should then feel itself in a position to offer further assistance, this would best be directed towards relieving British air forces of certain defence commitments in the Far East.

47. The most important of these commitments is the defence of Singapore, for which 10 squadrons are required under present estimates. Even when the increases authorised for our Far East Command have been provided, a great measure of reliance is placed upon the arrival of reinforcing units from India and Iraq.

48. If therefore New Zealand were able to contribute to the air forces stationed at Singapore in time of peace, this would increase our strength at that fortress, and would obviate some of the uncertainty which is bound to result from relying on reinforcing units to complete first-line defences.

49. We welcome the scheme recently put forward by the New Zealand Government for increasing the number of trained pilots seconded to the Royal Air Force each year.

50. With the backing of the proposed war organisation for training pilots referred to in paragraph 53, we suggest that a valuable contribution in peace would be an immediate intake of additional personnel, both for flying duties and for maintenance, up to the full capacity which New Zealand training establishments can now develop. This would be additional to the increase of trained pilots seconded to the Royal Air Force.

51. The New Zealand Government has recently accepted an offer made by the Home Government suggesting that the Air Mission to Australia which is to investigate possibilities of developing the manufacture of aircraft in that Dominion should visit New Zealand for a similar purpose. If the Mission's report is encouraging, the establishment of an aircraft manufacturing organisation in New Zealand would be a most valuable asset to Imperial Defence. As a beginning such an industry would probably be called upon to manufacture aircraft of the elementary training type.

In time of war.

52. If New Zealand could undertake the despatch of air reinforcements to Singapore during a period of strained relations they would be of great assistance. The moving of reinforcements by air, however, would be impracticable until such a time as New Zealand possesses aircraft capable of making the flight from New Zealand to Australia.

53. We have already considered and expressed our appreciation of the proposal by the New Zealand Government to set up an organisation to train 1,000 pilots a year in time of war, which should prove a most valuable contribution. The full output could not be reached until the scheme had been in full war-time operation for 15 months. The plan relies on sources in the United Kingdom for the supply of aircraft, and during the current year an appreciable portion of the aircraft required has been promised; but under present arrangements the complete plan will not be operable for nearly two years.

54. But before the first pilots so trained become available New Zealand could assist by helping to make good personnel wastage in Royal Air Force units in the Far East. Personnel could reach Singapore much more rapidly from New Zealand than from England, and even if the fortress were invested it might be possible to fly in personnel reinforcements from Australian territory.

Conclusions.

55. Should His Majesty's Government in New Zealand wish to review their present agreed contributions to Imperial Defence in peace and war, the following are the main forms of assistance which we should welcome:—

Peace.

Navy.

- (a) The manning and maintenance of a third cruiser and two escort vessels.
- (b) The provision of asdic sets and training in their use.
- (c) Stiffening New Zealand merchant vessels in peace so as to enable them to mount defensive armament in time of war.
- (d) The attendance of New Zealand Merchant Navy Officers at the Defence Course for officers of the mercantile marine.

Army.

- (e) Co-operation in the defence of our Far Eastern bases by assisting in the provision of garrisons.

Air.

- (f) The provision of air forces at Singapore to assist in the defence of the base.
- (g) The use to capacity of existing training facilities to increase reserves of flying and maintenance personnel.
- (h) The development in New Zealand of an organisation for the manufacture of aircraft.

*War.**Navy.*

- (i) Action on the lines of (a), (b) and (c) above if not already taken in peace.
- (j) In addition to placing the New Zealand Division at our disposal, the provision and maintenance of two Armed Merchant Cruisers.

Army.

- (k) The provision of immediate reinforcements, as outlined in New Zealand Telegram No. 145 for use as required in the Pacific.
- (l) The provision of a division for despatch overseas.

Air.

- (m) Operation in full of the scheme for training 1,000 pilots per annum. The scheme to be extended to embrace the training of flying crews and maintenance personnel.
- (n) The further reinforcement of the garrison at Singapore either by a complete unit, or by the provision of personnel reserves.

(Signed)

C. L. N. NEWALL.

ROGER BACKHOUSE.

R. F. ADAM,

D.C.I.G.S. (for C.I.G.S.).

*Richmond Terrace, S.W. 1,
February 1, 1939.*

ENCLOSURE NO. 1 TO ANNEX II.

Paraphrase Telegram from the Governor-General of New Zealand, dated December 24, 1938.—(Received 7.24 A.M., December 24, 1938.)

No. 145. Secret.

Reference my telegram No. 144 of to-day. I am asked by my Prime Minister to inform you that various Pacific Islands have recently been visited by New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, who have now rendered a report on the defences of Fiji and Tonga. Summary of their conclusions is as follows:—

Begins: (a) They emphasise the strategical importance of the Fiji and Tongan Groups. (b) The scale of attack to be expected in these groups has risen to one infantry brigade A. (c) Fiji Defence Force should be expanded from its present strength of 400 to a total of 1,300 all ranks. (d) Port of Suva should be defended by two naval 6-inch guns. (e) A Defence Force of one battalion should be formed in Tonga. (f) New Zealand should have a brigade group in readiness in war time to reinforce the Islands as required. (g) In Suva local forces are required for minesweeping and for examination services. (h) New Zealand should be prepared to send aircraft to operate from these Islands in war. (i) Two landing-grounds are required in Fiji, the necessary surveys and estimates having been made. (j) Two landing-grounds are required in the Tonga Group; the surveys should now be made by a New Zealand aerodrome engineer. (k) Part of New Zealand's reserves of fuel, bombs and ammunition should be held in Fiji and part of the reserves of fuel in Tonga.

It must be made clear that His Majesty's Government in New Zealand have not yet approved recommendations (f), (h), (j) and (k).

Copy of the full report is being sent to you by despatch, and copies are being sent to His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia and to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific. It is thought that this report will naturally be discussed at the forthcoming conference on defence matters.

ENCLOSURE NO. 2 TO ANNEX II.

Paraphrase Telegram from the Governor-General of New Zealand; dated January 22, 1939.—(Received 9.30 A.M. January 22, 1939.)

No. 9. Secret.

Your secret telegram No. 12 of 16th January. My Prime Minister desires me to inform you that, so far as New Zealand Chiefs of Staff report is concerned, it deals with a strategic survey of certain Pacific Islands only, and report is adequately summarised in my secret telegram of 24th December, No. 145. At this stage His Majesty's Government in New Zealand would like to set out more precisely the points which they suggest should be discussed at the Conference, namely:—

(a) Possible lines of action by enemy Powers against Empire interests in the south-west Pacific in the period before the arrival of naval reinforcements, including (i) operations to capture bases in the Western Pacific; (ii) nature and scale of possible operations against Empire trade; (iii) nature and scale of possible operations against Australian and New Zealand territory.

(b) Measures necessary to defend: (i) Pacific Islands and Mandated territories, notably Fiji, Tonga, New Hebrides, Solomon Islands; (ii) ships trading with United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia; (iii) Australian and New Zealand territories.

(c) Most effective means of co-operation with the United Kingdom in the defence of British Commonwealth after providing for security in the South-Western Pacific, including schemes for mutual reinforcement.

(d) Co-ordination of defence policy in peace and war.

(e) Sources of supplies of equipment after the outbreak of war.

(f) Scales of reserves of supplies, including fuel and equipment.

(g) Possible effect of German demand for the return of Mandated Territories.

(h) Economic aspects of war, including probable effect on trade and shipping.

(j) Policy in relation to Trans-Pacific Air route and the United States activities in the Pacific.

This agenda is dependent only in a small degree on report of the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff which affects point (b) above only. His Majesty's Government in New Zealand had hoped that it would be possible to hold the conference at latest by mid-March and they are somewhat disturbed at the proposal of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom not to hold it before the middle of April. His Majesty's Government in New Zealand still hope this will be possible and in view of relatively small importance of report of New Zealand Staff Chiefs already referred to, suggest that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom may be able to decide on their representations forthwith and arrange for the arrival of their representatives by the middle of March.

The substance of this telegram is being repeated to the High Commissioner for Western Pacific and to His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia.
