

FINAL EDITION.

D.C.C. STRAT. I
COPY NO. 50
22ND. APRIL, 1939.

DEFENCE CONFERENCE, 1939.

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure
the secrecy of this document.

SECRET.

REPORT
OF THE
STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
ON THE
STRATEGIC PROBLEMS
OF THE
SOUTH WEST PACIFIC.

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEEONSTRATEGIC PROBLEMS.DELEGATES.

Hon. W. Nash, (Chairman).
 Hon. F. Jones,
 Major-General J.E. Duigan, C.B., D.S.O.
 Commodore H.E. Horan, D.S.C., R.N.
 Group Captain H.W.L. Saunders, M.C., D.C.F., M.M.
 C.A. Berendsen, Esq., C.M.G.
 Lieut-Colonel W.G. Stevens
 Vice Admiral Sir Ragnar Colvin, K.B.E., C.B., R.N.
 Major-General P.J. Mackesy, C.B., D.S.O., M.C.
 Air-Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, K.C.B., D.S.O.
 Colonel V.A.H. Sturdee, C.B.E., D.S.O..
 Wing-Commander G. Jones, D.F.C., R.A.A.F.

ADVISERS.

Group Captain L.M. Isitt, R.N.Z.A.F.
 Major A.H. Stafford
 H.H. Vaskess Esq., O.B.E.
 Commander J.C.D. Esdaile, R.A.N.
 Paymaster Captain J.B. Foley, O.B.E., R.A.N.

CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT.

Lt.-Commander T. Ellis, R.N.
 Captain D.T. Maxwell, N.Z.S.C.
 N.E. Coatar, Esq

SECRETARY TO THE COMMITTEE.

Major G.H. Clifton, M.C., N.Z.S.C.

I N D E X

			<u>PAGE.</u>
SECTION	I	Courses of action open to Japan	4.
"	II	Measures necessary to defend the Pacific Islands and Mandated Territories in the South West Pacific.	10.
"	III	Measures necessary to defend ships trading with the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia.	22.
"	IV	Measures necessary for the defence of Australian and New Zealand Territories.	25.
"	V	Co-operation in the Defence of the British Commonwealth after providing for the security of the South-Western Pacific.	28.
"	VI	Co-ordination of defence policy in peace and war.	33.
		<u>CONCLUSION.</u>	34.
APPENDIX	I	Additional arms and equipment required for Islands in the South West Pacific.	35.
"	II	Summary of Recommendations.	37.

S E C T I O N I.COURSES OF ACTION OPEN TO JAPAN.1. General Principles.

The Conference reviewed the possible lines of action by enemy powers against Empire interests in the South-west Pacific. The nature and scale of various possible operations against Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands were examined and their degree of probability assessed in the light of such information as was available in the various appreciations and memoranda which were before the Conference.

2. The Conference took note of the firm intention of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, as expressed on all occasions, to defend Singapore as one of the two key-stones on which the survival of the British Empire depended.

3. Considerable discussion centred round the question of the size of the British Fleet and the date of its arrival at Singapore. It was accepted that this would necessarily depend on the moment when Japan entered the war and upon the losses, if any, which our opponents or Great Britain had previously sustained in the European theatre of war.

4. It was made clear to the Conference that the uncertainties referred to above did not alter the intention of the United Kingdom Government to despatch a portion of the British Fleet to the Far East immediately on the entry of Japan into the war, which would act on the defensive to an extent sufficient to give a measure of cover to Australia and New Zealand. It was further noted by the Conference that the entry of Italy into the war against Great Britain would still not affect this intention.

Scales of Attack:

5. It remained for the Conference to arrive at some idea of the

scales of attack which might conceivably be possible during the period before the British Fleet had arrived at Singapore and before its influence had reduced the initiative of the Japanese in regard to their sea borne operations.

6. Factors which might influence Japanese strategy and possibly restrict their initiative were discussed and attention was drawn to Japan's present preoccupation in China and to the necessity for her taking into account the potential threat from both the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. In addition, the uncertainty as to the time of arrival and the strength of the British Fleet in Far Eastern waters might limit the nature and scale of operations which the Japanese would consider themselves justified in embarking upon.

7. The ability of Singapore to hold out against any scale of sea borne Japanese attack pending the arrival of the British Fleet was considered, and on the assumption of the safe arrival of the reinforcements including a brigade from India and of Air Forces from India and Irak, it was accepted that Singapore would be in a position to resist capture.

8. Attention was then turned to other possible and more likely lines of action by enemy powers. The Conference was impressed by the large variety of objectives available to the Japanese in the Far East and South-western Pacific. It was obvious that the Japanese would inevitably have the initiative pending the arrival of a British Fleet in the Far East, when such initiative would be curtailed.

Maximum Scale of Attack:

9. Notwithstanding the argument produced that the main operations of the Japanese would logically tend to be directed against Hong Kong, Singapore, or the establishment of bases in Borneo or the capture of certain objectives in the Islands of the Dutch East Indies and even discounting their present embarrassment in China or anxiety as to the attitude of the U.S.S.R. and U.S.A., the Conference considered that, though highly improbable, it was still conceivable that the Japanese might embark upon a large scale operation against Australia or New Zealand with a view to occupation of territory.

10. Though such an operation would depend on the Japanese

obtaining control of sea communications in the Pacific and in the Indian Ocean for an indefinite period, it is still possible to visualise some initial reverse to Great Britain in the European theatre of war which might, in the opinion of the Japanese, afford considerable opportunity and make such an operation a justifiable risk.

Intermediate Scale of Attack:

11. The Conference then considered a less ambitious Japanese measure envisaging an expedition supported by a Naval Force of sufficient strength to deal effectively with the British cruisers, if encountered in Australian or New Zealand waters.

12. The strength of such an expedition might be such that its range of objectives could include temporary occupation of territory on the mainland of Australia or New Zealand for the purpose of destroying some important centre of industry or to provide and cover a temporary air base from which this could be effected by air operations. Alternatively the expedition might be for the purpose of taking and occupying an island for use as an advance base for operations of ships, submarines and aircraft.

13. The Conference felt bound to record their view as to the necessity for not excluding the possibility of an operation of this nature.

Most Probable Scale of Attack:

14. Without attempting to include all the various possible courses of action open to the Japanese, of which there would be a great variety, the Conference recorded the following as examples of the offensive measures most likely to be adopted by the Japanese, in addition to the possibilities mentioned in the preceding paragraphs:-

- (a) Use of cruisers and armed merchant cruisers for dislocating sea communications to the maximum possible extent; an operation which would presumably also be undertaken by any German armed merchant cruisers which happened to be in the Pacific.

- (b) General employment of submarines in restricted or unrestricted warfare against merchant shipping at focal points on the assumption that refuelling facilities will be available to the Japanese in isolated islands.
- (c) The employment of one or more armed merchant cruisers with landing parties for occupation of some temporary refuelling base or for the destruction of an island cable station or other vulnerable points.
- (d) Cruiser raids against ports of Australia, New Zealand, and perhaps the more important islands of the Western Pacific, in sufficient strength to deal with British cruisers in these waters if encountered. Raids of this nature might be effected by coastal bombardment, by air attack, by landing parties, or by a combination of these.

15. Such operations would depend for their intensity on the ability of the enemy to establish advanced bases in the South-Western Pacific.

16. Certain discussion took place in the endeavour to form some estimate of the time that Japan would choose to enter a war on the side of Germany and Italy. In the absence of any concrete information as to the degree of co-operation and planning which exists between members of the Anti-Comintern Pact it was difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion.

17. The Conference, having considered the possible courses of action open to Japan, outlined in paragraphs 9 to 15 above, and assuming that Singapore can be made secure, and on that assumption alone, formed the opinion that the most probable scale of attack to be faced by Australia and New Zealand is that outlined under various headings in paragraph 14.

The Conference therefore recommends that the fullest preparation at the earliest possible date should be completed to meet this scale of attack.

18. Furthermore the Conference considered that these preparations for defence which it now recommends should not be regarded as the limit to which it may be necessary to proceed.

Reconnaissance of Japanese Line of Approach:

19. While the Conference recognised the possibilities of more Eastern routes, it seemed clear that enemy forces en route to Australia or New Zealand would normally pass through the chain of islands New Guinea--Solomon Islands--New Hebrides--Fiji--Tonga.

20. The intensity of raiding activities which New Zealand and Australia must be prepared to face will depend on the number of vessels which the enemy can set aside for the purpose and upon the distance from their nearest base. At present the nearest Japanese bases are in the Marshall and Caroline Islands, some 2,600 miles from Auckland and 2,300 miles from Brisbane.

21. It is possible, therefore, that the Japanese may seek to establish a base or bases further south along their line of approach. The most suitable places for these bases would be Port Moresby in New Guinea and Suva in Fiji, because of their port facilities and other resources. However, numerous alternative sheltered anchorages exist in other islands, and these cannot be disregarded.

22. As it is out of the question to attempt to defend all these islands with garrisons, it therefore appeared desirable to select a limited number of air bases from which it would be possible to keep the chain of islands between Tonga and New Guinea under intermittent observation.

23. Having regard to all the known factors, the Conference recommends that the areas of responsibility for air reconnaissance and action as between New Zealand and Australia be as follows:-

- (a) Australia: New Guinea to Solomon Islands
to New Hebrides.
- (b) New Zealand: Sandwich Island (in the New Hebrides)
to Fiji and Tonga.

Landing facilities on Sandwich Island will be common to both.

24. Such reconnaissance, coupled with a suitable Intelligence organisation with means of wireless communication, should provide warning of the approach of raiding forces so as to enable our naval and air forces to launch an attack under favourable conditions and at the same time influence the routing of our shipping.

To enable this to be done, the Conference recommends the establishment of a base at Fiji in addition to that already being prepared at Port Moresby, and that suitable flying boat facilities in the Solomon and New Hebrides groups should be surveyed, and subsequently arrangements made for refuelling.

25. In considering the detailed organisation and strength of the forces required for the defence of the South-West Pacific, the Conference fully appreciated that this was entirely a matter for the decision of the respective Governments concerned, none of whom are in any way bound by the recommendations contained in this Report.

SECTION II.MEASURES NECESSARY TO DEFEND
THE PACIFIC ISLANDS AND MANDATED TERRITORIES IN
THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC.

26. In discussing the measures necessary for the defence of the Islands in the South West Pacific, the Conference wishes to emphasize that not even Fiji can be defended against full scale attack with the local resources available. In the more important cases it is possible to provide protection against a landing party from one ship; but against any larger scale of attack the defence would require outside assistance.

Attention is drawn to the fact that if and when landing grounds are prepared throughout this area, adequate measures should be taken for their defence by land forces.

FIJI.

27. The Conference would emphasize that particular importance is placed on the protection of Fiji for the following reasons:-

- (a) The harbour facilities of Suva and the stocks of oil fuel held there make it one of the most important naval fuelling bases in the South West Pacific Islands,
- (b) The islands have important economic value, owing to the following considerations; their considerable size (7083 square miles); their productiveness not only of many forms of foodstuffs (including rice) but also in gold and cattle; their population, which is docile and small in numbers (29.3 to the square mile). An Asiatic Power such as Japan could maintain a large force there on a plentiful, suitable and readily increased food supply; moreover, in the event of permanent annexation the group could be used as a valuable outlet for surplus population.

- (c) Fiji will be of increasing importance as a centre of air communication, both for civil and military purposes.
- (d) It is an important cable and wireless station.
- (e) If in Japanese hands, it would be a convenient centre from which to attack trans-Pacific shipping.
- (f) It is the seat of British Colonial Government in the Pacific area.

28. Measures for the defence of Fiji have been worked out by the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, whose recommendations as set out in Paper N.Z.C.O.S. 16 have been considered by the Overseas Defence Committee of the United Kingdom. In submitting the recommendations set out below the Conference took note of the above-mentioned paper, together with relevant comments by the O.D.C.

Scale of Attack:

29. The Conference is of the opinion that this cannot be closely defined; the problem is affected by the proximity of the Japanese Mandated Islands as the base from which an attack might be launched and by the lack of reliable information regarding Japanese preparations in these Islands. It is possible that they might despatch a force of a strength sufficient to capture Fiji under present conditions; this attack could take place at an early stage after the outbreak of hostilities.

Local Land Forces:

30. In N.Z. C.O.S. 16 it was recommended that the Fiji Defence Forces should be increased to one coast defence battery at Suva and two infantry battalions with ancillary services; the total establishment being 50 officers and 1,250 other ranks. It was noted that, after further consideration of the problem and bearing in mind the questions of cost and of personnel available, alternative recommendations have been put forward by the Fiji

Government to the British Government. These include increasing the defence force in the Suva area to one complete composite battalion of Europeans and Fijians and providing the nucleus of a second battalion in the Lautoka area by forming two European companies. The question of enlisting Fijians in the additional forces was discussed, and it was considered that they would be efficient for the purpose required if the units were raised on the basis 50% European, 50% Fijian. It was further pointed out that the Indians resident in Fiji are suitable for enlistment in ancillary services only.

31. Taking all the circumstances into account, it appears that New Zealand could most conveniently provide the requisite officer and N.C.O. personnel for the Permanent Staff and the additional rifles and web equipment for the expanded force. The Conference was informed, however, that extra machine guns and S.A. ammunition are not available from existing reserve stocks in New Zealand.

32. In the opinion of the Conference the recommendations made by the Fiji Government are adequate, provided steps are taken to reinforce Fiji from New Zealand after the emergency arises. We would emphasize, however, the necessity for the separate organization in the Lautoka area, particularly in view of the air measures contemplated.

Reinforcements from New Zealand:

33. A recommendation has already been put forward in N.Z.C.O.S.16 to the effect that a force of one brigade group should be ready in New Zealand to move at short notice to reinforce local defence forces in the South West Pacific generally, and in Fiji in particular. Reference is made in C.O.S. 832 to this recommendation and to the great value of having a potential reinforcement on such a scale. The Conference is of the opinion that New Zealand should consider assisting in the manner set out and if the Government so decides a force could be despatched when the emergency arises.

Coast Defences:

34. Having taken note of the opinion of the O.D.C. as communicated to them by the United Kingdom delegation, to the effect that 6 inch coast defence guns at Suva -

"...as a deterrent to a raid designed to capture the island or to do as much damage as possible, would not necessarily be effective. Nor would they prevent the bombardment of Suva as 6 in. 15° guns would be outranged by a modern cruiser."

the Conference gave further consideration to the recommendation of the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff (N.Z.C.O.S. 16) that two 6 inch guns and two searchlights should be provided at Suva.

35. The Conference would emphasize that although 6 inch guns will not give complete protection against long range bombardment, they should prevent enemy vessels from approaching to effective bombardment range. Long range bombardment by naval vessels, owing to its comparative ineffectiveness, is an unlikely form of attack and its only value lies in its effect on the morale of the civil population. The Conference considers that so important a harbour as Suva should be afforded reasonable protection from the risks of close bombardment.

Protection against a raid designed to capture the island must depend upon the mobile forces recommended; the coast defence battery at Suva is not primarily intended for this purpose.

The Conference therefore finds itself compelled to endorse the recommendations of N.Z.C.O.S. in respect to the provision of 6 inch guns and searchlights at Suva.

36. It is also of the opinion that if and when the guns are installed, every effort should be made to place them on permanent concrete mountings at the earliest opportunity.

It was noted that, in reply to a previous inquiry from New Zealand, suitable 6 inch Mk. XI guns with P.III or P.V Mountings and other stores are held in Sydney. The Conference

recommends that the Admiralty be approached to place two at the disposal of the Fiji Government. We suggest that this question be taken up immediately, as there would be a time lag of at least four months in the provision of the necessary ammunition. It would also be necessary to adapt the guns for land use, but we are informed that there are no insuperable difficulties in this respect, and that the work can be carried out either in Australia or in New Zealand.

37. The Conference was advised regarding the steps which are being taken in Australia for the provision of relatively cheap searchlight equipment incorporating the use of Ford V.8. engines, and strongly recommend that further information on this matter be obtained by the Fiji Government before proceeding with the final project.

38. As regards the battery establishment the Conference recommends that the New Zealand Government be approached to provide key personnel of 1 officer and 12 other ranks, thus allowing of a regular change round of the detachment; and that the remaining personnel of the battery be recruited locally the numbers required being approximately 6 officers and 106 other ranks.

Air Measures:

39. Recommendations are put forward in N.Z.C.O.S. 16 for the provision of two landing grounds, one in the vicinity of Suva and an alternative one on the drier North West coast. The Conference is of the opinion that both landing grounds are necessary in view of the exceptional climatic conditions, tropical storms at times being of such severity that a landing would occasionally be extremely difficult and dangerous at one landing ground, though possible at the other.

40. From the military point of view the establishment of these landing grounds is a direct measure towards the defence of New Zealand and of Fiji itself, although they are also part of the wider scheme of the air reconnaissance plan on the line Port Moresby - Fiji.

According to the approximate estimate already prepared, the cost of forming the landing grounds will be £28,900 and £27,500 respectively. It was noted that the period of construction of one landing ground from the date of commencing operations will be approximately nine months.

41. If New Zealand aircraft are to operate from Fiji it will be necessary to ensure that reserves of fuel, bombs and ammunition are maintained in the area in question.

42. The major benefits of the establishment of these landing grounds, and the provision of aircraft with the necessary reserves of extra fuel, bombs and ammunition, will accrue to Fiji and New Zealand. But with the collaboration of Australia in the air reconnaissance between Port Moresby and Fiji they will also contribute materially to the general defensive arrangements in the South Western Pacific.

43. The Conference recommends that the extra capital costs incurred should be shared by the United Kingdom and New Zealand; and that the construction of the landing grounds be immediately undertaken by the New Zealand Government with every possible assistance from the Fijian Government if the recommendation is accepted by New Zealand.

ISLANDS EAST OF FIJI.

TONGA:

44. In view of the financial difficulties - the annual revenue of Tonga being only £64,000 - and owing to the lesser importance of Tonga, we consider that the local forces to be raised there should be limited to one company. The Conference recommends that the force should be raised and that the cost incurred, estimated at £5,000 per annum, should be determined between the United Kingdom and Tongan Governments.

The Conference further recommends that the New Zealand Government be requested to provide 250 rifles and web equipment, and that the United Kingdom Government be requested to provide the necessary machine guns and small arms ammunition.

45. Recommendations were put forward in N.Z.C.O.S. 16 for the establishment of two landing grounds; one in Tongatabu (where it is understood that the Tongan Government have offered facilities) and one in the Vavau Group. The value of an emergency landing ground in the Tongan Group was recognised, and the Conference recommends that the New Zealand Government be asked to make the necessary preliminary survey.

Samoa:

46. The Conference took note of the measures which have already been implemented to form one European company of 150 other ranks adequately equipped with arms and ammunition. We fully approve of what has been done and have no further recommendations to make.

Fanning Island:

47. The New Zealand Government has already accepted responsibility for the despatch of a force to protect the cable station at this Island. The Conference was informed that a Regular Force of 150 men is now being raised in New Zealand so that the necessary garrison may be despatched at three days' notice after June 1939.

48. The Conference took note of the observations made by the O.D.C., regarding the difficulties of placing a peace-time garrison at Fanning Island; but, in view of further investigations made more recently, are of the opinion that sufficient resources and amenities can be provided for such a force. The Conference therefore recommends that, owing to the distance of this island from New Zealand and its comparative closeness to the Japanese Mandated Islands it would be advisable to station a proportion of the garrison, say one platoon, at Fanning Island in peace time in addition

to the existing small local defence force of 11 Europeans and three Native policemen. There are, however, possible political repercussions which we are not competent to take into account.

49. It was noted that reserves of food for the cable station staff are maintained to cover the three-monthly visits of shipping; The Conference recommends that the Cable Company be advised to build up this reserve to give a supply for a minimum period of six months, and that the Plantation Company be requested to make a similar provision for their native staff.

ISLANDS WEST OF FIJI.

Ocean and Nauru Islands:

50. In both cases small local defence forces have been formed and are partially reequipped. In the case of the former Island they consist of 35 Europeans supplemented by 60 Native constabulary. Landing on the Islands is considered difficult at any time, The Phosphate works, however, are exposed to bombardment.

51. It was noted that these Islands are not self-supporting as regards food supplies and that owing to the frequent visits of ships no reserves are held. The Conference recommends that representations be made to the British Phosphate Commissioners drawing attention to the possibility of shipping being interrupted on the outbreak of war, and the necessity for providing emergency reserves to give a supply for a minimum period of six months. The Conference further recommends that the quantities of arms and ammunition be increased.

New Hebrides.

52. Owing to the form of Government in this area being an Anglo-French Condominium there is no provision for a joint defence force and the only armed bodies available are forty to fifty British and a similar number of French police.

53. To implement the scheme for air reconnaissance on the general line Fiji - Port Moresby, it will be necessary to provide flying boat facilities at Sandwich Island, and to make further investigations for the construction of a landing ground in the same locality.

54. The Conference recommends that the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific approach the French authorities with a view to the work being carried out by and at the cost of the Australian Government. The Conference further strongly recommends that when further discussions take place with the French authorities the formation of a defence force and the provision of arms and equipment for it should be taken up.

Solomons:

55. The Conference was informed that everything possible would be done by Australia to assist the local defence forces, but that with so many more important commitments the despatch of troops to the area from Australia would be a matter for consideration. As one of the links in the proposed Port Moresby - Fiji reconnaissance line it will be necessary to provide flying boat facilities at, or near, Tulagi, and also to investigate the possibilities of establishing a landing ground in the same locality.

The Conference recommends that the work be carried out by, and the cost borne by the Australian Government.

Norfolk Island:

56. It was noted that steps are being taken to raise local forces in this area and the necessity also for legislation before such action can be implemented. The Conference recommends that these steps be expedited.

There would appear to be no necessity for the formation of an aerodrome on the Island.

New Caledonia:

57. We are informed that communications have passed between the United Kingdom and the French Governments as regards collaboration on defence measures in New Caledonia and also in the New Hebrides, and that the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific has been empowered to take the necessary action.

The Conference recommends that contact should be established at the earliest opportunity.

58. The following is a summary of the recommendations put forward by the Conference as regards Part II of this Report:-

(a) Fiji.

Army:

- (i) Expand Fijian Defence Force to one complete composite battalion at Suva and two European Companies at Lautoka; additional permanent staff (3), rifles and web equipment to be provided by New Zealand; machine guns and small arms ammunition to be obtained from the United Kingdom or Australia. (Paragraphs 30 to 32.)
- (ii) When the emergency arises New Zealand to consider forming one brigade group as a potential reinforcement for the area generally and Fiji in particular. (Paragraph 33.)
- (iii) Instal a coast defence battery at Suva consisting of two 6-inch guns and two searchlights; material to be provided from United Kingdom sources in Sydney; key personnel, 1 officer and 12 other ranks, from New Zealand; remaining establishment of 6 officers and 106 other ranks raised locally. (Paragraphs 34 to 38.)

AIR:

- (iv) New Zealand to construct two landing grounds. (paras. 39 and 40).
- (v) Part of New Zealand's reserve of fuel, bombs and ammunition to be held in Fiji. (para 41).
- (vi) Additional capital cost of expansion of New Zealand activities in connection with Fiji to be shared by the United Kingdom and New Zealand. (para 43).

(b) TONGA.

- (i) Raise one infantry company; New Zealand to provide 250 rifles and web equipment; United Kingdom to provide machine guns and small arms ammunition (para 44).
- (ii) New Zealand to undertake surveys of possible sites for emergency landing grounds. (para. 45).

(c) SAMOA.

Present proposals for formation of one European company approved; no further recommendation. (para. 46).

(d) FANNING ISLAND.

- (i) Garrison of one platoon from New Zealand to be stationed there in peace. (para. 48).
- (ii) Food reserves to be increased to a supply for a minimum period of six months. (para. 49.)

(e) OCEAN AND NAURU ISLANDS.

- (i) Food reserves to be built up to six months' supply (para.51).
- (ii) Supply of arms and ammunition to be increased. (para 51)

(f) NEW HEBRIDES.

(In collaboration with the French authorities).

(i) Provision of flying boat facilities at Sandwich Island; and further investigation of the construction of a landing ground in the same area; work to be undertaken and cost borne by Australian Government (paras. 53 and 54).

(ii) Local Defence Force to be formed and equipped. (para.54).

(g) SOLOMON ISLANDS.

(i) Provision of flying boat facilities at or near Tulagi and further investigation of the construction of a landing ground in the same area; the work to be undertaken and cost borne by the Australian Government. (para. 55).

(h) NORFOLK ISLAND.

Expedite steps being taken to raise local forces. (para.56).

(i) NEW CALEDONIA.

The High Commissioner for the Western Pacific to approach the French Government authorities in New Caledonia and also New Hebrides with regard to facilities in these areas. (para 57)

SECTION III.MEASURES NECESSARY TO DEFEND SHIPS TRADING
WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM, NEW ZEALAND AND
AUSTRALIA.Scale of Attack.

59. The scale of attack on British and neutral shipping trading to and from Australian and New Zealand ports has been assumed throughout to be as laid down in paragraph 14.

The Conference agrees that to deal with a scale of attack higher than that set out in paragraph 14 would be beyond the capacity of the Naval forces of the Dominions as at present constituted.

60. Attack on shipping is met normally by "EVASIVE ROUTEING" and the patrol of focal points and areas by mobile naval and air forces.

In the open ocean, evasive routeing will ensure a high degree of security because of the great distances involved and the wide dispersion of shipping on these routes.

In the focal areas the density of shipping must necessarily increase and consequently raiders have more opportunities for attack. In these areas therefore recourse must be had for defence to Naval and Air forces working in conjunction.

Evasive Routeing.

61. Evasive routeing is carried out by the NAVAL CONTROL SERVICE which has in effect the power to order the sailing and routeing of shipping. The Naval Control Service comes into operation on the receipt of a special telegram from the Admiralty and from then onward ships will diverge from their normal routes and receive instructions from the Naval Control Staffs at their ports of call.

62. In order to ensure co-operation between the two Dominions in the South-West Pacific, the Conference recommends that:-

- (a) Evasive routeing in the Tasman Sea should be controlled from Navy Office, Melbourne.

- (b) Evasive routeing east of New Zealand should be controlled by Navy Office, Wellington.

Focal Areas.

63. The Conference took note that the principal focal areas in the South West Pacific are for Australia round her South-eastern coasts and for New Zealand the approaches to her principal ports, viz., Auckland and Wellington.

Defence of Focal Areas.

64. For the defence of focal areas in the South-West Pacific, we are informed that there are available the ships on the Australian and New Zealand stations, i.e., probably four cruisers and eventually two armed merchant cruisers (Australian).

On the Australian coast there is, in addition, an air patrol covering the coastal route on the South-East coast working in conjunction with the cruiser force.

Owing to the few aircraft now available in New Zealand, no regular air patrol can be maintained in the focal areas. This situation will, however, improve as more aircraft become available and by August 1940 full scale patrols as necessary will be possible.

65. The Fiji - Port Moresby air reconnaissance line, recommended in paragraphs 22 to 24 above, should be of great assistance in covering all naval operations in the South-West Pacific and in giving warning of the approach of raiders towards the focal areas and information concerning enemy fuelling bases.

66. It was noted that the other focal areas through which an appreciable part of Australian and the majority of New Zealand trade now pass are off Vancouver, Panama and Cape Horn. The Conference recommends that information should be sought as to what action is contemplated by the Admiralty should there be a liability for a high proportion of losses in these areas.

Attack by Submarines on Trade.

67. In case the enemy employs submarines for attack on shipping these attacks can only be serious in focal areas. This necessitates the provision of craft suitable for locating and destroying submarines.

It was noted that in Australia, in addition to destroyers and escort vessels, a number of commercial craft have been earmarked for the purpose, and provision for asdic equipment is being made. An Anti-submarine school has also been started.

68. In New Zealand the fitting of auxiliary vessels is not practicable and the Conference recommends that the Government should give consideration to the three miscellaneous vessels, the construction of which is now being considered by the New Zealand Government, being fitted with asdics, the training of the few ratings concerned being carried out in Australia.

Armed Merchant Cruisers.

69. In view of the small number of warships in the South West Pacific and as there are no ships on the New Zealand register suitable for conversion, the Conference recommends that the Admiralty should be asked to earmark two ships suitable for conversion to armed merchant cruisers for service in these waters, and that the New Zealand Government should be asked to consider the question of defraying their cost of conversion and maintenance in war.

SECTION IV.MEASURES NECESSARY FOR THE DEFENCE OF AUSTRALIAN
AND NEW ZEALAND TERRITORIES.

70. Naval considerations are dealt with in paragraphs 84 to 88. The Conference agrees that the ultimate security of Australia and New Zealand depends upon the security of Singapore and the timely arrival in the Far East of a British Fleet.

AUSTRALIA:

71. The Government of Australia does not reject the possibility of invasion and its ultimate aim is to provide an army that would deter a hostile power from undertaking large-scale operations against Australia.

For this reason the frame-work of a Field Army of two cavalry and five infantry divisions has been retained in peace.

It is the aim of the Australian Government to complete the armament, equipment and training of existing units of these formations as soon as practicable.

72. The strength of the militia forces has been raised to a peace establishment of over 70,000 and approval has been given by the Government for a Regular Force to be raised to act as a covering force on mobilization. The strength of the latter force may ultimately be about 7,500 (War Establishment 10,000).

Of this, a force of one artillery brigade, two rifle battalions and one artillery brigade signal section has been approved by the Government to be raised this year (strength about 1,700). This Regular Force will be highly mobile and entirely motorized.

73. In addition to the above measures, the coast defences of Australian ports have been modernized and a mobile force has been raised and despatched to Port Darwin for its defence. The five most important ports are being provided with anti-aircraft defences.

74. Naval and air bases are being developed for the use of Imperial and Australian squadrons at Port Darwin and Port Moresby. The strength of the Australian Air Force is in process of being increased to a total of 19 squadrons, or 212 first line aircraft. Eleven of these squadrons with a first line strength of 131 aircraft are already in existence. The full programme will be completed by 1941 and is considered by the Conference to be the minimum necessary to meet the probable scale of attack referred to in paragraph 14.

75. The Conference took note of the effort which is being made by Australia to increase her readiness for war, which includes an expenditure of over £70,000,000 during the next three years.

76. The Conference wishes to draw attention to the fact that the land forces at present available for the defence of Papua, Mandated New Guinea and Norfolk Island appear to be inadequate.

The Conference also took note of the intention to establish at Port Moresby, a reconnaissance unit equipped with 4 flying boats and a further unit of 4 flying boats near Newcastle. In view of the proposed extension of the reconnaissance line to include the Solomon Islands and New Hebrides, it is suggested that the Australian Government should consider increasing this force of flying boats.

NEW ZEALAND:

77. The present New Zealand Territorial Force, with a peace establishment of 9,500, was designed as the foundation of a force to meet the scale of attack equal to that envisaged in paragraph 14. The organization is the nucleus of a Mounted Brigade and an Infantry Division. Coast defence troops are provided for in addition. The various units of the existing force are on a low peace establishment. The coast defences of New Zealand ports have been modernised and guns for the defended port of Lyttelton have been ordered.

78. The Conference is informed that the present Regular Force of 600 all ranks is being increased by 150 to enable the force previously mentioned in paragraph 47 to be sent, if necessary, to Fanning

Island.

79. The Conference considers that a considerable expansion of the Regular Force is highly desirable if time is to be ensured for the mobilization and completion of training of Territorial Forces. A Regular Force of this nature would form the basis of an expanded Territorial Force and would, moreover, fulfil another important function, in maintaining a high standard of efficiency and a flow of up to date instructors. It is recommended that the peace strength of the Territorial Force should be increased by about 6,000, in order to shorten the time necessary to pass from a peace to a war footing.

80. The Conference took note that the New Zealand Government have approved an expansion programme for the Air Force which will provide two Regular Heavy Bomber Squadrons, one Regular Light Bomber squadron, four Territorial General Reconnaissance Squadrons, plus three Flights, with a total first line strength of ninety-six aircraft, together with a Depot and a Flying Training School. A second Flying Training School will be added if the proposals in Para. 93 are approved. The capital cost of this programme will be approximately four million pounds. To date, one Flying Training School, the Depot, and three Territorial Squadrons have been formed and the regular personnel strength is ninety officers and six hundred and sixty airmen including personnel under training.

81. By December, 1939, one Regular Heavy Bomber Squadron and the Regular Light Bomber Squadron will also be available. Furthermore, considerable progress has been made in the provision of aerodromes, buildings, equipment, and the training of personnel for the remaining units which will be formed during 1940.

82. The Conference considers that the Air Force envisaged is the minimum necessary to meet the scale of attack outlined in paragraph 14.

SECTION V.CO-OPERATION IN THE DEFENCE OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH,
AFTER PROVIDING FOR THE SECURITY OF THE SOUTH WESTERN
PACIFIC.

83. Appreciating that the security of the United Kingdom and the security of Singapore are the keystones on which the survival of the British Commonwealth of Nations depends; and realizing, also, the heavy burden of providing the forces required, which is at present so largely borne by the United Kingdom, the Conference has thoroughly explored the means by which it might be possible for the Dominions to ease this burden.

In arriving at their recommendations the advice of the Chiefs of Staff of the United Kingdom has been at the disposal of members of the Conference.

N A V A L.NEW ZEALAND:

84. The following measures apart from those for the normal maintenance of the New Zealand Naval Forces have been approved by the New Zealand Government and are in course of execution:-

- (a) Increase of Oil Fuel Reserves at Auckland and Wellington by 24,000 tons.
- (b) Increased recruiting programme to man the ships with 100% New Zealand personnel.
- (c) Provision of a new Wireless Station at Devonport Dockyard.
- (d) The purchase of three vessels for training duties in peace and minesweeping and anti-submarine duties in war.

85. The United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff have suggested that New Zealand should consider as additional measures, the manning and maintenance of a third cruiser and two escort vessels; the provision of asdic sets and training in their use; the stiffening of New

Zealand Merchant vessels in peace so as to enable them to mount defensive armaments in time of war; and the attendance of New Zealand Merchant Navy officers at the Defence Course for Officers of the Mercantile Marine.

The Conference recommends that the New Zealand Government give consideration to the manning and maintenance of a third cruiser and two escort vessels, and to the stiffening of New Zealand Merchant vessels (27 vessels of over 1,600 tons are affected).

The Conference has recommended in paragraph 68 that the New Zealand Government should provide asdic sets for the three miscellaneous vessels, the construction of which is now being considered.

The Conference note that the Defence Course for officers of the Mercantile Marine cannot be established in New Zealand but full advantage is being taken of the Courses which are held in Sydney and Melbourne.

86. The Conference recommends that in the event of the New Zealand Government being unable fully to carry out in peace the measures as set forth in the immediate preceding paragraph that the proposals be reconsidered at the outbreak of war.

87. It is understood that a paper, which will contain recommendations by the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff, for Australian co-operation in Imperial defence, is at present being prepared but was not completed in time for this Conference, but, acting on advice received at the Imperial Conference in 1937 and from time to time since then, the following measures apart from those for the normal maintenance of the Royal Australian Navy have been adopted:-

(a) Addition of the following vessels to the Australian Squadron:-

Two 6" cruisers.
Two Tribal class destroyers.
Two escort vessels.
Twelve motor torpedo boats.
Three seaward defence vessels.

- (b) Modernisation of two 8-inch cruisers, and the cruiser "Adelaide".
- (c) Local seaward defence such as A/S booms, A/T nets, indicator loops, auxiliary A/S and M/S craft and gear.
- (d) Construction of strategic naval W/T and D/F stations at Canberra, Darwin and Fremantle.
- (e) Increase in storage and reserves of oil fuel to 210 thousand tons.
- (f) Establishment of mine production facilities.
- (g) Establishment of a base at Port Darwin and its military and air defences and facilities principally to accommodate a United Kingdom naval cruiser force for control of the Darwin-Singapore area.
- (h) Establishment of an anti-submarine school at Sydney.
- (i) Stiffening of defensively equipped merchant ships.
- (j) Undertaking responsibility for five armed merchant cruisers, three on United Kingdom account and two on Australian account.
- (k) Undertaking responsibility on United Kingdom account for certain supply arrangements for Singapore.
- (l) Hydrographic surveys of strategic areas off Northern Australian coast.

88. The Conference is informed that the Government is taking active steps to investigate the provision of a dry dock capable of accommodating a capital ship.

ARMY

89. The Conference took note that in proposals made by the Chiefs of Staff of the United Kingdom for peace time participation in the general defence of the British Commonwealth by Australia and New Zealand, should they so desire, it was suggested, inter alia, that among the appropriate means of doing so would be the provision of a unit as part of the garrison at Singapore. It was suggested that this unit might be either for coast defence or anti-aircraft duties, or possibly a beach defence battalion. These suggestions have been fully considered.

90. The New Zealand Government has already approved of a Regular Force of 150 all ranks being raised as a garrison for Fanning Island; this number could be included in the expansion of the Regular Force recommended in paragraph 79.

91. The proposals already discussed, and set forth in paragraph 79 of the Report for the increase of the New Zealand Territorial Force by 6,000 men and for an adequate addition to the New Zealand Regular Force would provide a complete organization with trained leaders and trained reserves; to ensure the security of New Zealand itself against any likely scale of attack, and also to facilitate the rapid organization and completion of training of the Territorial Force on the outbreak of war.

AIR.

New Zealand.

PEACE:

92. The Conference considers that the most effective contribution which the New Zealand Air Force can make in peace is to increase its output of trained pilots for the Royal Air Force.

93. The scheme to put this proposal into effect, involving the establishment of a second flying training school, is now under consideration by the New Zealand Government.

94. The development of an organization for the manufacture of training aircraft has been recommended by the British Air Mission, and it is hoped that the De Havilland Aircraft Company will establish

a factory for this purpose in New Zealand at an early date.

WAR:

95. At the outbreak of war, the New Zealand Government, it is understood, intends to operate a scheme for training a thousand pilots per year. It will not, however, be possible to extend the scheme to embrace the training of flying crews without a considerable increase in training organization, which would be difficult to provide. Moreover, there may be difficulty in obtaining sufficient candidates with the necessary physical and educational qualifications to provide 1,000 pilots, plus observers, per annum. It would, however, be possible to train approximately 650 pilots and a total of 650 observers and air gunners per year within the War Training Organization at present contemplated.

This alternative is recommended if the Air Ministry prefer that New Zealand should train pilots and crews instead of pilots only.

96. After the New Zealand operational units have been brought up to war establishment and the initial requirements of the New Zealand War Training Organization have been met, the Conference recommends to the New Zealand Government that flight fitters and riggers may also be trained for the Royal Air Force.

97. The Conference is of the opinion that New Zealand will not be able to provide a squadron to reinforce Singapore after the outbreak of war until the anticipated scale of attack in the South Western Pacific has been substantially diminished. The New Zealand Government is, however, recommended to provide such personnel reinforcements as may be available from the War Training Organization.

AUSTRALIA:

98. The Conference took further note of the Australian Government's intention to increase the Royal Australian Air Force from eight squadrons with a first-line strength of 96 aircraft to 19 squadrons with a first-line strength of 212 aircraft, including two squadrons of aircraft for service at Darwin.

SECTION VI.

CO-ORDINATION OF DEFENCE POLICY IN PEACE AND WAR.

99. The Conference considers that the actual co-ordination of defence policy both in peace and war is primarily one which is in the realm of discussion between Governments and, as such, outside the sphere of this Conference.
100. There is, however, much scope for co-ordination and co-operation of activities within the framework of existing and announced Government policies. In this respect the Conference agrees that the basic essential is the fullest exchange of information on all matters relating to defence, this last term being interpreted in its broadest sense.
101. It appears to the Conference that the existing relations in this respect between the United Kingdom and Australia are satisfactory. Between the United Kingdom and New Zealand, while there is a free interchange of information, there is not the same degree of personal liaison as in the case of Australia. The conference recommends that the United Kingdom and New Zealand Governments should investigate the desirability of a system of liaison officers.
102. There is already a measure of interchange of information between the respective services in Australia and New Zealand. As far as this relates to the Naval Services this interchange is quite satisfactory and is all that is necessary. There is also reasonable interchange of information between the Australian Military and Air Services and the corresponding Services in New Zealand. There seems no doubt that the Services in both countries are fully alive to the mutual advantage to be gained by the closest possible liaison, and the Conference recommends that it be left to the respective Boards to take all necessary action in this respect.

103. There are, however, numerous other subjects of National importance, closely related to defence, and in some respects of essential defence interest, upon which an exchange of information would be of inestimable value, such as Censorship, Control of Aliens, Register of Man Power, etc.

It is, of course, quite clear that, for example, an organization for the control of aliens in Australia may not be suitable for New Zealand and vice versa.

104. The Conference recommends that there should be the maximum exchange of information on all procedure and machinery that will assist either Dominion in respect of the defence of their respective areas.

CONCLUSION.

105. The Conference, after full consideration of the proposals and recommendations already set out in this Report, are of the opinion that the countries concerned would be well advised to consider the making of preparations to meet a greater scale of attack.

The Conference wishes to draw the attention of the Governments concerned to the summary of its recommendations as set out in Appendix II of this Report. (Page 37.)

APPENDIX I TO STRATEGICAL REPORT.Additional Arms and Equipment required for
Islands in the South-west Pacific.

The following is a summary of the recommendations put forward by the Conference in Part II of the Report. It is suggested that the stores should be provided as follows:-
List A from United Kingdom sources, List B by New Zealand.

FIJI.LIST A.

- 2 6 in. Mark XI guns on 15° P.III or P.V mountings with autosights
(and gun and section stores.)
- 2 90 c.m. Projectors with H.C.D. magazine lamps (and the
necessary switches for motor control.)
- 2 40 K.W. 100 V.D.C. generators with cold starting Diesel or Ford
engines (with switchboard and all cables).
- 1 Travel correction Calculator (with appurtenances.)
- 1 Depression range finder and range transmission gear.

Ammunition.

- 1,000 rounds C.P. B.C. 6 in. shell H.E.
- 100 rounds 6 in. Shell H.E. (fuzed for firing landwards.)
- 28 Vickers guns complete with all spares.
- 16 Lewis guns complete.
- 500,000 rounds S.A.A. .303 ball.
- 20,000 " " .303 tracer.
- 5,000 rifle grenades.
- 15 pistols Signal 1 inch.
- 2,500 cartridges illuminating 1 inch.
- 1,500 " Signal Green.
- 1,500 " " Red.

LIST B.

- 500 rifles S.M.L.E. Mk. III complete with bayonets.
- 500 sets web equipment Pattern 1908 - complete.

ARMS AND AMMUNITION REQUIRED IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S TERRITORIES.

GILBERT AND ELLICE ISLANDS COLONY.

LIST A.

2 Lewis (or Bren) Guns.
25 rifles S.M.L.E. Mk. III.
40,000 rounds S.A. Ammunition.

BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS PROTECTORATE.

LIST A.

4 Lewis (or Bren) guns.
250 Rifles, S.M.L.E. Mk. III.
120,000 rounds S.A. ammunition.

TONGA.

LIST A.

4 Lewis (or Bren) guns.
160,000 rounds of S.A. ammunition.

LIST B.

250 Rifles S.M.L.E. Mk. III.
250 Sets web equipment, Pattern 1908.

APPENDIX II TO STRATEGICAL REPORTSUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONSNEW ZEALAND.

<u>Serial No.</u>	<u>Item.</u>	<u>Reference Paragraph.</u>
1.	Area of responsibility for air reconnaissance Tonga to Sandwich Island (in New Hebrides).	23
2.	Establishment of air base at Fiji.	24
3.	Provide material (see Appendix I for details) and key personnel of 2 officers and 14 other ranks for Fiji Defence Force.	31 and 38
4.	Construct two landing grounds at Fiji; cost shared with United Kingdom.	43
5.	Hold part of air reserves of fuel, administration and bombs in Fiji; extra capital cost shared with United Kingdom.	41 and 43
6.	Surveys at Tonga for possible emergency landing grounds.	45
7.	Station a garrison of one platoon at Fanning Island in peace.	48
8.	Advise Cable Company to hold minimum of six months' food supplies at Fanning Island.	49
9.	Evasive routing East of New Zealand to be controlled by Navy Office, Wellington.	62
10.	Inquiry from Admiralty re liability for shipping losses on Vancouver, Panama and Cape Horn routes.	66
11.	Fit three miscellaneous vessels, if constructed, with "asdic".	68
12.	Consider defraying cost of conversion of two armed merchant cruisers and maintain them in war; action by Admiralty.	69
13.	Increase peace strength of Territorial Force by 6,000 and make adequate expansion of Regular Force.	79
14.	Consider manning and maintaining third cruiser and two escort vessels, and stiffening of 27 merchant vessels over 1,600 tons.	85
15.	Proposals in Serials 11 and 14 to be reconsidered on outbreak of war if not fully done in peace.	85

NEW ZEALAND (Cont'd.)

<u>Serial No.</u>	<u>Item.</u>	<u>Reference Paragraph.</u>
16.	In war, New Zealand to train 650 pilots and 650 observers and air gunners, annually.	95
17.	In war, after initial local requirements met, train flight fitters and riggers for R.A.F.	96
18.	In war, provide whatever personnel reinforcements are available for overseas service.	97
19.	Investigate desirability of system of liaison officers with United Kingdom.	101
20.	Maximum exchange with Australia of information on procedure, etc. on National Security matters.	104

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

AUSTRALIA.

<u>Serial No.</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reference Paragraph</u>
1	Area of responsibility for Air Reconnaissance; Sandwich Island (New Hebrides) to New Guinea.	23
2.	Provide flying boat facilities at Sandwich Island (New Hebrides) and investigate landing ground same locality.	53
3.	Carry out same action as in Serial 2 at or near Tulagi in Solomon Islands.	55
4.	Expedite steps to raise local defence force at Norfolk Island.	56
5.	Evasive routeing in Tasman Sea to be controlled by Navy Office, Melbourne.	62
6.	Inquiry from Admiralty re liability for shipping losses on Vancouver, Panama and Cape Horn Routes.	66
7.	Maximum exchange with New Zealand of information on procedure, etc. on national defence and allied matters.	104

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.UNITED KINGDOM.

<u>Serial No.</u>	<u>Item.</u>	<u>Reference Paragraph.</u>
1.	Provide materiel for Fiji Defences (See Appendix I for full details).	31 and 36.
2.	Share additional capital cost with New Zealand of constructing two landing grounds and forming air reserve of fuel, ammunition and bombs at FIJI.	41 and 43.
3.	Provide materiel for Tonga Defence Force (see Appendix I for details).	44.
4.	Determine allocation of annual cost (£5,000) of proposed Tonga Defence Force.	44.
5.	Earmark two ships for armed merchant cruisers for New Zealand.	69.
6.	Investigate desirability of system of liaison officers with New Zealand.	101.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.FIJI.

<u>Serial No.</u>	<u>Item.</u>	<u>Reference Paragraph.</u>
1.	Increase Fiji Defence Force to one complete composite battalion at Suva and two European Companies at Lautoka.	30.
2.	Install Coast Defence Battery of two 6 in. guns and two search-lights at Suva and enlist necessary personnel of 6 officers and 106 other ranks.	35 to 38.
3.	Obtain additional materiel for Serials 1 and 2 (see Appendix I for details) from United Kingdom sources.	31 and 36.
4.	Assist New Zealand Government to prepare two landing grounds.	43.
5.	Advise Plantation Company at Fanning Island to hold reserve of six months food supply.	49.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR WESTERN PACIFIC.

<u>Serial No.</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reference Paragraph</u>
1.	Advise British Phosphate Commissioners to hold six months' food supply at Nauru and Ocean Islands.	51
2.	Obtain additional material for Ocean and Nauru Island Defence Forces (see Appendix I for details).	51
3.	Discuss with French Authorities at New Hebrides formation of joint defence force and provision of air facilities at Sandwich Island.	53 & 54
4.	Discuss with French Authorities at New Caledonia collaboration on defence measures.	57
