

PARAPHRASE TELEGRAM

NEW ZEALAND

To the Governor-General of New Zealand.

(Sent 9.15 p.m., 20th February, 1939).

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No. 27. Secret.

Your telegram of 17th February No. 23. Following is text of telegram which has been sent to Prime Minister of Commonwealth of Australia. Begins. 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. Text ends.