

DEFENCE CONFERENCE, 1939. D.C.C. (Supply) 4

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18th April, 1939.

SECRET.

MEMORANDUM for

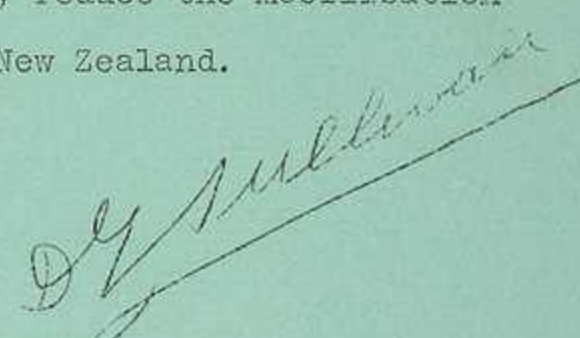
The Chairman,
Strategic Committee.

One of the items on the agenda of the Supply
Committee read as follows :-

"(vi) The practicability of establishing Imperial
reserves of equipment in the Dominions to meet
the requirements of reinforcements despatched
to the South Pacific."

The observations of the Committee on this point
are set out on the attached paper.

The Committee wishes the Strategic Committee to
take note of this aspect of the question of the provision
of a force for the defence of southern Pacific territories.
Any equipment provided for a force intended to protect
Fiji or elsewhere must necessarily reduce the mobilisation
stocks available in Australia or New Zealand.


Chairman,
Supply Committee.

Encl:

PROPOSED REPLY TO SECTION (vi) OF THE AGENDA
SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 4 OF PAPER D.C.4.

Neither reserves of equipment nor the capacity for manufacturing munitions are at present available to make the establishment of Imperial reserves of equipment in the South Pacific a practical proposition.

Imperial reserves of equipment are held in Singapore for the use of British Naval, Military and Air forces in time of war. Co-operation with Australian and New Zealand forces in the matter of the provision of such equipment is of great importance and anything which can be done by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand to assist the movement of United Kingdom or Dominion Naval, Air and Land forces in the South Pacific would be highly desirable.

If it is decided that forces should be prepared in Australia or New Zealand for the defence of Imperial interests in Fiji or other Pacific territories, a clear statement as to the size and composition of such forces should be made at an early date in order to permit of the preparation in the United Kingdom or elsewhere of the necessary equipment for the maintenance of such forces.
