

APPRECIATION

DEFENCE OF PACIFIC COAST OF CANADA

1. Object

To consider the effect of the outbreak of war with Japan upon the existing Army defences on the Pacific Coast.

2. Possibility of Attack from Overseas

(a) Present strengths and dispositions of Army forces on the Pacific Coast are designed to meet the existing forms and scales of attack as laid down by the Chiefs of Staff Committee and are based on the assumption that if Japan enters the war possible action is likely to take the form of "hit and run" raids only.

(b) This assumption was reviewed by the Chiefs of Staff Committee on 12th November, 1941, and was considered still applicable to existing conditions. It can be accepted that United States co-operation will be forthcoming at the outbreak of war. With the United States at war with Japan, the lengthy and exposed sea communications to the West Coast of North America would preclude anything in the nature of a sustained attack by Japan upon the Coast of British Columbia. All information points to Japanese objectives in the event of war being northwards against Russia or southwards against Thailand, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies rather than across the Pacific. Therefore, the question to be decided is whether the Army forces are adequate to resist the increased possibility of enemy raids on West Coast objectives.

(c) The detailed scales of attack provide for small landing parties at Victoria-Esquimalt, Prince Rupert and the Advanced Air Bases but not at Vancouver. Present dispositions of active units provide one infantry battalion at Victoria-Esquimalt, one at Vancouver-New Westminster, a battalion (less one company) at Prince Rupert, one infantry company at

accepted the troops now available as adequate for the purpose. It is, therefore, considered that no augmentation of the forces now in British Columbia is necessary to meet the accepted scales of attack by raiding parties on land objectives.

3. Possibility of Internal Disorder

- (a) In the Report of the Special Committee appointed to consider measures to be taken in the event of war with Japan (which has been approved by the Government) the Committee reported that, while internment might be necessary in some individual cases, it was anticipated that the bulk of the Japanese population would continue their normal occupations. It is not considered, therefore, that serious disorders caused by local Japanese are to be anticipated.
- (b) To meet any threat of internal disorder which might require the intervention of troops there are available in the Vancouver - New Westminster area one Active infantry battalion and four Reserve infantry battalions; in the Kamloops area one Reserve battalion, and in the Nelson-Trail area one Reserve regiment and three platoons, V.C. of C.
- (c) It is considered that these forces are adequate to deal with any civil disturbances that might be anticipated and to provide protection (if required) on communications leading to Eastern Canada.

4. Demand for Additional Military Forces

While the present dispositions are considered adequate to meet any situation that might arise, it must be anticipated that on the outbreak of war strong pressure may be brought upon the Government to increase the Active forces in British Columbia. In that event, it might become necessary to move additional troops from Eastern Canada to the Pacific Coast.

5. Availability of Additional Troops

- (a) 6th Division -