

THE BASIC OBJECTIVES OF BRITISH COMMONWEALTH DEFENCE POLICY AND GENERAL STRATEGY (1950)

A SUITABLE BASIS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF STRATEGIC RESPONSIBILITY AND WAR EFFORT (1950)

Editor's Introduction

The following two reports by the Defence Committee were part of a larger body of correspondence and analysis that informed and summarised negotiations with Great Britain and New Zealand about defence cooperation between the three countries. They outlined Australia's overall strategy within the Commonwealth framework and were endorsed by the Council of Defence only days before the outbreak of the Korean War.

The report on *The Basic Objectives of British Commonwealth Defence Policy and General Strategy* confirmed earlier assessments that 'all free nations' were endangered by the USSR, which could 'engage in a land war at any time' (para 5). Australia should 'join with the other Commonwealth countries, the United States, and the countries of Western Europe in organising essential deterrent forces, [and] building up effective defences', requiring forces at high readiness, equipped for their wartime tasks (paras 7, 26, 27). Western strategy would be based on an atomic air offensive, which required defended air bases within striking distance of the USSR (paras 9-10). While '[e]ach allied nation will naturally consider the security of its own country as its first strategic aim', success required prioritising the defence of support areas, their approaches and lines of communication (paras 12-15). There was 'no threat of invasion' and the security of Australia's zone of strategic responsibility required only the defence of communications, of vital areas against sea and air attack, and internal security measures (paras 19-22). As '[t]he fate of Australia would depend upon the result of the conflicts in Europe and the Middle East', Australian forces not required for home defence should be made available for Commonwealth planning, which 'would need to be co-ordinated with American plans for the defence of the Pacific' (paras 18, 24, 28-30).

The report on *A Suitable Basis for the Distribution of Strategic Responsibility and War Effort* noted that the ANZAM region was 'necessary to give defence in depth to Australia and New Zealand', and that while Britain, Australia and New Zealand remained responsible for the direct defence of their 'home areas' in the zone, the 'Australian Government and Defence Machinery' should plan, direct and control all other operations within the zone (paras 5-9). After mobilisation, Australia would have forces available beyond those needed for home defence, which should be employed in accordance with overall Commonwealth strategy (paras 12-16). The US had sufficient forces available for the North Pacific, while a land threat to the ANZAM area did not yet exist and 'should be evident well in advance' (para 19). But '[t]he arrival of any forces in the Middle East, in the very early stages after the outbreak of war, would have a beneficial effect out of all proportion to their size' (para 19). Therefore, two sets of plans should be drawn up – one for the initial deployment of army and air force contingents to the either Middle East, the other for Malaya – with the possibility of sending later contingents to either of these two theatres (paras 21-23).

THE BASIC OBJECTIVES OF BRITISH COMMONWEALTH DEFENCE POLICY AND GENERAL STRATEGY

JUNE 1950

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This paper was endorsed by the Defence Committee on 15 June 1950

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN RELATION TO CO-OPERATION IN BRITISH COMMONWEALTH DEFENCE

DEFENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON “THE BASIC OBJECTIVES OF BRITISH COMMONWEALTH DEFENCE POLICY AND GENERAL STRATEGY”

INTRODUCTION

1. In December, 1948, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Defence approved recommendations which had been made in a report by the Defence Committee after consideration of the United Kingdom Paper PMM(48)1, “The World Situation and its Defence Aspects”. The recommendations referred to were that:-

“...the Government should authorise an examination by the Defence Committee, in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand Liaison Staffs of the following:-

- a. The basic objectives of British Commonwealth Defence policy and general strategy;
- b. A suitable basis for the distribution of strategic responsibility and war effort.

When Government approval has been given to the conclusions reached in staff discussions under (a) and (b) above, general outline plans to meet immediate and long term dangers should be prepared.

2. This paper deals specifically with subject (a) above but only in general terms with subject (b) which is the subject of a separate report.

3. The undermentioned documents have been taken into consideration by the Committee in its examination of this subject:-

- a. Memorandum of the United Kingdom Government *The World Situation and its Defence Aspects* (PMM(48)1, 23rd September, 1948).
- b. A report by the Defence Committee on the United Kingdom Paper PMM(48)1 at (a) above (Attachment “A” to Defence Committee Minute No: 252/1948).

- c. Comments by the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff on Australian Chiefs of Staff Appreciation September, 1947 (Attachment to letter from United Kingdom Prime Minister of 29th December 1948).
- d. United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff Committee – Defence Appreciation as a basis for discussion between Commonwealth Military Staff (JOS(49)49, 9th February 1949).

WORLD SITUATION AND THREAT TO SECURITY

4. To determine the Basic Objectives of British Commonwealth Defence Policy and General Strategy, it is necessary first to consider the world situation and the threat to security.

5. The following outstanding factors of military significance from United Kingdom paper PMM(48)1 which are still cogent, formed the basis of the Defence Committee's report which was approved by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Defence, and forwarded to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom with a letter dated 10th December, 1948:-

- a. "The establishment of collective security under the United Nations has not been achieved.
- b. Soviet policy and aims are a threat to all free nations who are in danger of being subjugated one by one.
- c. Soviet policy, if pursued, will inevitably lead to a clash.
- d. The Soviet can engage in a land war at any time. The probability of the Soviet engaging in war may be affected for the time being by economic or relative air power factors, but if she felt confident of attaining her primary objective rapidly, economic considerations themselves would not prevent her from engaging in war.

6. It was stated in the United Kingdom paper PMM(48)1, that, in the present world situation, the United Kingdom Government had thought it necessary to pursue the following policy:-

- (i) To stimulate political resistance to the spread of communism and to promote economic recovery in those countries threatened by it, and
- (ii) Recognising that no one country can safely stand alone, to join with the United States and the countries of Western Europe and the Commonwealth in organising all deterrent forces, in building up effective defences, and in working out appropriate collective security arrangements in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

DEFENCE POLICY

7. The Committee was of the opinion that the following policy, which has been recommended by the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff and conforms to the United Kingdom Government policy, should be adopted as Australian Defence Policy:-

- a. To join with the other Commonwealth countries, the United States and the countries of Western Europe in organising essential deterrence forces, in building up effective defences, and in working out the necessary plans, preferably on a regional basis, in accordance with Article 52 of the United Nations Charter.
- b. To resist the spread of communism by all means short of war.

WAR AIMS

8. With a view to building up effective defence and working out the necessary plans, it is necessary first to determine the war aims toward which Allied strategy should be directed. In this connection we are in agreement with the following views of the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff:-

“We consider that it is not possible to limit the Allied War Aim to the narrow one of restoring the situation to that immediately preceding the outbreak of war, or even to that of driving the Russians out of territories over which they have acquired control. We therefore define the Allied War Aims as:-

- a. to ensure the abandonment by Russia of further military and ideological aggression;
- b. to create conditions conducive to world peace.”

MILITARY MEASURES TO ACHIEVE THE AIMS

9. *Air Offensive:* Because of the geographical characteristics of Russia, and the great numerical superiority of her land forces, the only means of taking offensive action initially is by a strategic air offensive.

10. *Bases and Sea Areas Essential for the Strategic Air Offensive:* To launch an air offensive, the bases from which it must be mounted and the vital sea and air communications necessary to the maintenance of the allied war effort must be protected. Air bases must be selected so that all the important targets in Russia are within range. Nearly all the important targets in Soviet territory could be reached from bases in Western Europe, the Middle East, Pakistan, and the Japanese Islands. At present it is not possible to plan on using Pakistan bases, at least from the outset, as there is no defence arrangement with that country. It may be, however, that this situation will change and these bases become available.

11. *Defence of Areas Essential to the Allies:* In addition to the land areas required for air bases, the retention of certain other areas is vital to the allies. These fall into three classes -

- a. Home territories of the Allies.

- b. Support Areas.
- c. Areas to give depth in defence

12. *Home Territories of the Allies:* Each allied nation will naturally consider the security of its own country as its first strategic aim. Nevertheless, if the Allies are to achieve victory, their resources must be concentrated on the defence of those areas which are essential to overall strategy. In the long run, it is by an allied victory in the principal theatres of operations that the ultimate security of the home territories of all the Allies will be achieved.

13. *Support Areas:* Certain areas are the sources of manpower, raw materials and industrial resources, to which the Allies must have ready access if they are to be able to prosecute the war. It is obvious that such areas must be defended.

14. *Areas to give Depth to Defence:* Certain additional areas must be held in order to give defence in depth to our bases and support areas in war. The decision as to which areas these are will be brought out in the detailed plans for each area. It is of paramount importance to hold that part of Western Europe that is adjacent to the British Isles.

15. *Control of Sea and Air Communications:* To hold the air bases essential for launching the air offensive, sea and air communications between these air bases, and the main support areas must be controlled. Similarly, to deploy forces as required by the overall strategy, and to utilise materials and resources to the full, control of certain sea and air routes will be essential.

CONCLUSIONS ON ALLIED STRATEGY

16. We are in agreement with the conclusion of the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff, that the following military measures are essential to implement allied strategy:-

- a. To deliver the strategic air offensive from the outbreak of war;
- b. To hold the air bases and sea areas essential for our air offensive. These are:-
 - (i) The United Kingdom.
 - (ii) The Middle East.
 - (iii) Japan.
- c. It would also be desirable to hold as bases for our air offensive:-
 - (i) Sea areas for possible carrier offensives.
 - (ii) Pakistan.
- d. To defend the main support areas which are:-
 - (i) United States of America and Canada.
 - (ii) Australia and New Zealand.

- (iii) South Africa and certain other parts of the African continent.
- (iv) The Argentine and certain other parts of South America.
- e. To ensure the internal security and local defence of support areas of less importance.
- f. To hold those areas necessary to give defence in depth to allied air bases and support areas.
- g. To retain firm control of the essential sea and air communications, and of land areas necessary to ensure this control.

17. *Indian Sub-Continent.* Should it be possible subsequently to make appropriate arrangements with India and Pakistan, under which the Indian Sub-Continent could be included as a support area, this would be most advantageous.

THE STRATEGIC PROBLEM IN THE AUSTRALIAN AREA

18. In the event of a major war in the foreseeable future, it would be global in character, the major conflicts taking place in Europe and the Middle East, and to a lesser degree in the Far East. The fate of Australia would depend upon the result of the conflicts in Europe and the Middle East where the war would be decided.

In paragraphs 12 and 16 above, the security of Australia has been shown to be essential to the war aims, firstly as a 'Home Territory' and secondly, as a 'Support Area'. It is essential to strike a correct balance between the requirements of local defence and the contribution to decisive overseas theatres, on which the security of Australia depends.

19. The strategic importance to Russia of Europe and the Middle East is such that the major effort of her armed forces is likely to be made in those theatres. We note and agree with the views expressed by the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff in the attachment to the United Kingdom Prime Minister's letter of 29th December, 1948, that –

“...The most immediate and dangerous Russian threats will be in Western Europe and the Middle East,...The successful defence of the Middle East depends on the rapid build up of Commonwealth and American Forces. We estimate that we shall be hard put to it to deploy adequate forces in time.”

Australia is most unlikely to be an objective of high strategic priority in Russian plans. In addition, geographic factors and the inferiority of Russian surface naval forces, decrease the probability of serious attack. The security of the Australian mainland will depend, therefore, on –

- a. The distance from Australia of possible enemy air bases; and
- b. The control and security of sea and air communications in the Pacific, South-East Asian Area and Indian Ocean.

20. The Australian Chiefs of Staff in their Appreciation of the Strategic Position of Australia (September 1947) defined the danger line for hostile penetration as a line which includes the Philippines and Malaya. The United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff were in general agreement with this view. There is no threat of invasion, and, provided there is an adequate superiority of Allied Naval and Air Forces in the Pacific and a secure hold is maintained on the Philippines and Malaya, the scale of air attack will be negligible.

21. Insofar as the military threat is concerned, it is considered that the extension of Communist influence in Asia will make available to Soviet Russia further potential air and submarine bases from which attacks could be mounted against sea communications in South-East Asia, and thus lead to an increase in the probable scale of attack in this area. The degree of subversive activity in South-East Asia will also increase. However, the appreciation of the Australian strategic position, outlined in paragraphs 19 and 20 above, is not materially affected by the foregoing during the present review.

22. The security of the zone of immediate strategic interest to Australia, south of the line through the Philippines and Malaya therefore, requires the following in relation to the probable form and scale of attack:-

- a. Protection of sea and air communications.
- b. Seaward and air defence of vital areas.
- c. Measures to ensure internal security.

23. *Outline Plans* for seaward and air defences of vital areas in Australia are under consideration and an assessment of the forces required to implement these plans has been made. The Defence Committee's views on the measures required to ensure internal security in Australia have been formulated and incorporated in a separate paper.

Plans for protection of sea and air communications are currently under consideration in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand Service Liaison Staffs and will be completed in the near future.

24. In the light of this situation, we consider it essential to prepare for participation of Australian forces, surplus to those required for Australia's home defence in British Commonwealth emergency and long range plans.

TIME FACTOR

25. In previous wars, deterioration of the world situation has usually provided a considerable period of warning prior to the advent of war. It has been possible to collect, well in advance, evidence of preparation for war. In addition, the ready availability of United Kingdom forces has provided a cushion of time during which this country has been able to organise and mobilise her armed forces.

The principal factors which affect the present situation are:-

- a. The speed of modern warfare has increased immeasurably. This provides an aggressor nation with an opportunity for much greater strategic gains in the opening stages of war; and
- b. Russian Armed Forces are maintained in a high degree of mobilisation, and could engage in war at any time. Their strategic location is such that they can launch offensive operations without moving forces overseas.

For these reasons the period of warning of the possible outbreak of hostilities is likely to be very short. In certain circumstances there may be no warning at all.

26. In view of the time factor it is essential for plans to be fully developed in peace for the deployment of adequate Allied forces to protect vital strategic areas with maximum speed in an emergency. Armed forces must be maintained in a higher state of readiness for war than has previously been necessary.

27. Allied general strategic plans will directly influence the composition, strength and armament of the Australian Services, and the material resources which Australia should provide in war. The maximum effectiveness of Australia's contribution, in a future war, will only be achieved if the composition, strength and armament of the Services in peace is based on their probable role in the general strategy for war. It is essential, therefore, that there should be an early examination, in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand Authorities of the part which Australian Armed Forces may play in British Commonwealth emergency and long range plans.

BASIS OF PLANNING

28. It is considered that plans for Australian participation in British Commonwealth Defence should be developed initially on a regional basis in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand. At an appropriate stage of development, the plans would need to be co-ordinated with American plans for the defence of the Pacific. It is desirable also that plans for the defence of the area of vital strategic importance to the security of Australia should be linked ultimately with the plans of other friendly nations having possessions in the South-West Pacific Area.

29. Information with regard to United States intentions in the Pacific will have a major effect on planning. The information now available to us is a satisfactory basis for the preparation of plans and alternative plans on a Service level, but ultimate consideration and acceptance of such plans by the Australian Government would appear to be contingent on an agreement between the United Kingdom, the United States and Australian Governments as to how defence responsibilities are shared in the Far East, Southwest Pacific Area and the Middle East.

30. As has been stated in paragraphs 26 and 27 above, plans, and alternative plans if necessary, for the employment of all Australian forces likely to be engaged in war both at home and abroad, must be fully developed well in advance of events if the Australian contribution to Allied strategy is to be effective. Subject to it being clearly understood that the preparation of plans for the employment of Australian Armed Forces will not commit the Australian Government, unless it subsequently accepts specific plans, it is recommended that approval be given for emergency and long range plans to be developed, initially on the Service level, in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand Liaison Staffs. Proposals arising out of this planning should be submitted to the Minister for Defence.

RECOMMENDATION

31. The Committee recommended:

A. That the defence policy and general strategy, upon which planning is to be based, be –

(a) *Defence Policy:*

- (i) To join with the other Commonwealth countries, the United States and the countries of Western Europe in organising essential deterrent forces, in building up effective defences and in working out the necessary plans, preferably on a regional basis, in accordance with Article 52 of the United Nations Charter.
- (ii) To resist the spread of communism by all means short of war.

(b) *War Aims:*

- (i) To ensure the abandonment by Russia of further military and ideological aggression.
- (ii) To create conditions conducive to world peace.

(c) *Military Measures to implement Allied Strategy:*

- (i) To deliver the strategic air offensive from the outbreak of war.
- (ii) To hold the air bases and sea areas essential for our air offensive. These are –

The United Kingdom.
The Middle East.
Japan.

- (iii) It would also be desirable to hold as bases for our air offensive –

Sea areas for possible carrier offensives.
Pakistan.

- (iv) To defend the main support areas which are –

United States of America and Canada.
Australia and New Zealand.
South Africa and certain other parts of the African continent.
The Argentine and certain other parts of South America.

Should it be possible subsequently to make appropriate arrangements with India and Pakistan, under which the Indian Sub-Continent could be included as a support area, this would be most advantageous.

- (v) To ensure the internal security and local defence of support areas of less importance, as necessary.
- (vi) To hold those areas necessary to give defence in depth to Allied air bases and support areas;
- (vii) To retain firm control of the essential sea and air communications, and of land areas necessary to ensure the control; and

- B. That, subject to it being clearly understood that the preparation of plans for the employment of Australian Armed Forces will not commit the Australian Government, unless it subsequently accepts specific plans, approval be given for emergency and long range plans to be developed, initially on a Service level, in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand Liaison Staffs. Proposals arising out of this planning should be submitted to the Minister for Defence.

A SUITABLE BASIS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF STRATEGIC RESPONSIBILITY AND WAR EFFORT

JUNE 1950

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This paper was endorsed by the Defence Committee on 15 June 1950

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN RELATION TO CO-OPERATION IN BRITISH COMMONWEALTH DEFENCE

DEFENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON “A SUITABLE BASIS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF STRATEGIC RESPONSIBILITY AND WAR EFFORT”

INTRODUCTION

1. The Australian Prime Minister, in a letter dated 10th December, 1948, to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom stated –

“3. In extension of the conclusions of the Council of Defence of 20th April, 1948, I have authorised an examination by the Defence Committee, in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand Liaison Staffs, of the following:-

- a. The basic objectives of British Commonwealth Defence policy and general strategy.
- b. A suitable basis for the distribution of strategic responsibility and war effort.

4. When Government consideration has been given to the conclusions reached in official level discussions under paragraph 3(a) and (b) above, the next step would be the authorisation by Governments of the preparation of general outline plans to meet immediate and long term dangers.”

2. The views of the Defence Committee on “The basic objectives of British Commonwealth Defence policy and general strategy” have been given in a separate report.

3. As a result of the discussions in July and August, 1949, with the United Kingdom Planning Team and the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, and of the views received in March, 1950, from the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff with regard to the Regional Defence Organisation and Malaya, an outline of the overall requirements necessary to implement British Commonwealth Defence policy and general strategy has become available. This information has enabled the Defence Committee to formulate its views on “A Suitable Basis for the Distribution of Strategic Responsibility and War Effort.” These views are subject to any significant change in the probable form and scale of attack.

CONSIDERATION

Distribution of Strategic Responsibility

4. In the paper in which the Defence Committee gave its views in respect to the "Basic Objectives of British Commonwealth Defence Policy and General Strategy", it was observed that, in the event of a major war in the foreseeable future, it would be global in character, the major conflicts taking place in Europe and the Middle East, and, to a lesser degree, in the Far East. Of these Australia would be directly interested in the North Pacific/Far East and the Middle East, in which areas are two of the main bases for the strategic air offensive. It is understood that, in war, the North Pacific/Far East will be a region of American responsibility, while the Middle East would be primarily a region of British responsibility.

5. Between these two regions of major importance, there is a region, which is necessary to give defence in depth to Australia and New Zealand, and for which Australia has assumed the responsibility for the initiation of defence planning in peace. This region (the ANZAM Region), includes Australia and New Zealand, and territories in South-East Asia where the United Kingdom has responsibilities. The proposed detailed boundaries of the ANZAM Region, which have been agreed between the Australian Defence Committee and the United Kingdom and New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, are shown at Appendix 'A'.

6. The defence of the ANZAM Region includes the home defence of the countries within it. The Australian and New Zealand Governments, advised by their Chiefs of Staff, would remain responsible for the home defence of their respective countries. As regards Malaya, the United Kingdom Prime Minister, in a letter dated 28th September, 1948, in which he referred to the region in which Australia would assume the initiative for defence planning in peace-time, commented as follows:-

"I should like to emphasize that such planning does not involve any executive control in peace-time and that we do not contemplate removing the present United Kingdom Command in the Far East either in peace or war. Our treaty commitments with the Malay rulers entail very special responsibilities in that area for the United Kingdom, and we feel it necessary to reserve the right to make it clear to the local population, if necessary, that we have no intention of transferring to other countries either in peace or war, the responsibilities for and in Malaya which now rest with us."

For this reason, Malaya and other British possessions in the Region will be treated as home territories of the United Kingdom and the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff would be responsible to the United Kingdom Government for internal security and the home defence of those territories.

7. The defence of Malaya is, however, part of the regional defence problem, the military responsibility for which will be shared by the Australian, the United Kingdom and the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff. Until Malaya is actively and seriously threatened, the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff would be able to exercise direct military authority over Malaya Command, but should a serious threat develop, it would be desirable for the regional defence organisation described in paragraph 10 below to exercise overall responsibility for the defence of Malaya. In these circumstances, the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff could exercise their authority for

internal security through their accredited representative on the regional defence organisation, whilst the Service Commanders in Malaya would be responsible to that organisation for the executive control of operations. This would vest the responsibility for the defence of Malaya in an organisation situated geographically closer to the operations and would, moreover, be in accordance with the Australian Prime Minister's statement at the Prime Ministers' Conference in 1946, that there should be assigned to the Australian Government Machinery, responsibility for the development of the defence aspect of matters relating to regional security in the Pacific.

8. From an Australian point of view, therefore, it is considered that a suitable basis for the distribution of strategic responsibility would be for Australia –

- a. to be responsible for home defence of Australia and its Territories;
- b. in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand, to accept responsibility for the overall direction and control of operations, other than home defence, in an area which would approximate to the ANZAM Region. This responsibility would include all matters relating to the defence of the region as a whole, of which the defence of sea communications and the defence of Malaya will be the major considerations.

Regional Defence Organisation

9. The agreed machinery for developing British Commonwealth defence plans in the ANZAM Region is the Australian Government and Defence Machinery. This machinery consists essentially of the Council of Defence and the Department of Defence, including the Defence Committee and the Chiefs of Staff Committee. Full consultation in developing these defence plans with the United Kingdom and New Zealand Authorities through their accredited political and Service representatives in Australia is provided for. In peace, owing to important implications of Government policy and commitments that may be involved, the development of strategic planning in connection with co-operation in British Commonwealth Defence is under the general direction and supervision of the Defence Committee, in consultation with the United Kingdom and New Zealand Chiefs of Staff through their accredited representatives in Australia.

10. The political structure of the regional defence organisation to operate in war, has not yet been determined. From the military point of view, the responsibility for the overall direction and control of operations, other than for home defence, would lie with the Australian, the United Kingdom and the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff. It is proposed that this overall direction and control of operations would be exercised by the Australian Chiefs of Staff, and an accredited representative each of the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff and the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, functioning through the Australian Defence Machinery. This organisation would be known as the ANZAM Chiefs of Staff. Subsequently, it may be necessary for the Chiefs of Staff of other nations which may participate in the defence of the Region to be represented in this organisation.

11. Participation in the regional defence organisation by the countries concerned, should be on the basis of equality and an effective voice, and should be subject to the principle that the sovereign control of each country's policy is retained by its respective government and that the assent of its representative is required on whatever level a matter is considered. Without the assent of its accredited representative, a country should not be bound by the view of other representatives on any matter affecting a commitment on its part or the control or use of its forces and resources.

Distribution of Australian war effort

General

12. A conclusion as to the allocation of the manpower and material resources available for the main categories of the Australian war effort (the three fighting Services, their supplies and equipment, civilian needs, main support area requirements, &c.), would be required before final plans for each category could be approved. In order to establish a starting point for any detailed examination of the distribution of the Overall National War Effort of Australia, it is essential that the Fighting Services should make available the best possible estimate of the Australian forces which should be provided to assist in implementing Allied strategy in a future war.

13. An initial and conservative estimate of the Australian forces likely to be available has been made, based on the experience of the recent war. Under the present assessment of the probable form and scale of attack, the forces required for home defence have been estimated in current planning. It is evident, on this basis, that there will be certain forces available to meet other strategic requirements of British Commonwealth Defence, which are also essential for the security of Australia. A table embodying the following details is attached at Appendix "B".

- a. an initial estimate of the Australian forces likely to be available by the end of the first year of war;
- b. the estimated forces required for the home defence of Australia and its Territories;
- c. the estimated forces available to meet other strategic requirements after provision has been made for (b) above.

14. As a basis for planning it is necessary to make firm assumptions as to the areas in which Australian Forces may be deployed in war. These areas will determine –

- a. the organisation and training of the forces; and
- b. the amount and type of equipment and supplies and their provision.

15. Planning should be carried out in consultation with the appropriate United Kingdom and New Zealand authorities. When the Service plans become available, it will be possible to assess the Service demands on the National War Effort of Australia. It should then be possible to make a detailed examination of the manpower and material resources with a view to making an allocation of them to the main categories of the Australian War Effort.

Strategic Considerations in Important Theatres of War

16. The available military war effort should be employed where it will best contribute to the security of Australia in particular, and the British Commonwealth in general, in accordance with the basic objectives of British Commonwealth defence policy and general strategy.

17. In the event of a future war, the threat to Australia might be increased by adverse events in South-East Asia, but the security of Australia will depend ultimately on the outcome of the major conflicts in Europe and the Middle East, and to a lesser degree, on conflicts in the Far East.

18. To meet the threat in Western Europe, Atlantic Pact countries are best situated to provide the forces in time and thereafter maintain them effectively.

19. The main strategic considerations in the theatres of particular interest to Australia, are –

- a. North Pacific/Far East – The threat in this theatre, except for Hong Kong, would be confined to a sea and air threat, as the result of U.S.S.R. endeavouring to neutralise Japan and the Ryukyus as Allied bases for the strategic air offensive. Thus, enemy operations would be conducted primarily by Naval and Air Forces. Land operations of any magnitude in this theatre are not envisaged. This theatre is likely to be part of an American area of responsibility, and from information available it is safe to assume, as a basis for planning, that America will provide adequate forces there to counter any threat.
- b. The ANZAM Region – One of the Russian aims is the continued aggressive promotion of communism by all means short of war throughout the non-communist world, and experience indicates that she will first try to gain her objectives by subversive methods. An intensification of subversive activity in the ANZAM Region, especially in Malaya, is to be expected; and it is probable that Russia will rely initially on this form of aggression in her endeavour to gain control of Malaya. A military threat, therefore, may not develop until the outcome of this subversive activity in Malaya is apparent.

In the event of a military threat developing, provided control of the sea and air is maintained, the only possible serious threat to the region, as a whole, would be in the form of a land attack on Malaya from the north. This threat would not be likely to occur suddenly and should be evident well in advance.

- c. Middle East – The retention of this theatre is essential to British Commonwealth strategy. In this regard, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, in his letter of 29th December, 1948, stated –

“The successful defence of the Middle East depends on the rapid build up of Commonwealth and American Forces. We estimate that we shall be hard put to it to deploy adequate forces in time. The British Chiefs of Staff suggest, therefore, that any contribution which Australia is prepared to make, over and above those forces which she requires for the defence of areas vital to her home defence, would be most usefully employed in assisting in the defence of the Middle East.”

The crisis in the Middle East theatre will arise early, possibly within about three months of the outbreak of war. The arrival of any forces in the Middle East, in the very early stages after the outbreak of war, would have a beneficial effect out of all proportion to their size, and would be of greater value then, than would much larger forces sent at a later date.

Distribution of Australian Military War Effort

20. Initially, and possibly for some time after the outbreak of war, all Australian Naval Forces will be required for home defence and, in co-operation with United Kingdom, New Zealand and United States Forces, to secure the sea communications in the Pacific, South-East Asia and Indian Ocean Areas, and to protect overseas movements of Australian and New Zealand forces.

21. As indicated above (paragraph 19(b)), provided control of the sea and air is maintained, the security of Malaya will depend on the provision of adequate ground forces to repel a land attack. To meet the estimated possible threat, only comparatively small air forces would be required, and the Australian land forces likely to be raised during the first year of war could, in addition to meeting home defence requirements, provide for a contingent for the Middle East and a possible demand in Malaya.

22. In the opening stages of a war, the greatest danger, in areas of direct interest to Australia, is likely to exist in the Middle East, unless adequate forces can be deployed there in time. The security of the Middle East in the critical early stages, and ultimately the security of Australia, might be adversely affected if Australian forces were withheld unnecessarily to meet a possible threat to Malaya.

23. It is considered, therefore, that alternative plans for the employment of Australian Army and Air Forces, other than those required for home defence, should be developed concurrently to provide for:-

- a. deployment, in the Middle East, of the first army contingent and air force task force raised, with provision for later forces to be allotted to Malaya, should the possible threat develop;
- b. deployment in Malaya of the first army contingent and air force task force raised, with provision for later forces, not required in Malaya, to be allotted to the Middle East.

CONCLUSIONS

Strategic Responsibility

- 24.** A suitable basis for the distribution of strategic responsibility in war would be for Australia –
- a. to be responsible for home defence of Australia and its Territories;
 - b. in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand, to accept responsibility for the overall direction and control of operations, other than home defence, in an area which would approximate to the ANZAM Region, which includes Australia and New Zealand and territories in South-East Asia where the United Kingdom has responsibilities. The proposed detailed boundaries of the Region, which have been agreed between the Australian Defence Committee and the United Kingdom and New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, are shown at Appendix "A". This responsibility would include all matters relating to the defence of the region as a whole, of which the defence of sea communications and of Malaya will be the major considerations.

Regional Defence Organisation

25. The political structure of the regional defence organisation to operate in war has not yet been determined. The executive control of operations in the ANZAM Region should be exercised by the Australian Chiefs of Staff, an accredited representative of the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff, and an accredited representative of the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, functioning through the Australian Defence Machinery, each nation having an equal effective voice. This command organisation should be known in war as the ANZAM Chiefs of Staff. It is a development of the existing machinery which has been established for co-operation in British Commonwealth Defence. Subsequently, it may be necessary for the Chiefs of Staff of other nations, which may participate in the defence of the Region, to be represented in this organisation.

War Effort

26. In order to establish a starting point for the detailed examination of a balanced distribution of the overall National War Effort of Australia, the requirements of the Australian military war effort should first be estimated.

27. The Australian military war effort should be employed so that it will contribute most effectively to the security of Australia in particular, and the British Commonwealth in general, in accordance with the basic objectives of British Commonwealth defence policy and general strategy. The most effective employment of Australian forces to meet these requirements would be:

- a. in home defence;
- b. in the defence of sea communications in co-operation with United Kingdom, New Zealand and United States forces;

- c. in the Middle East; and
- d. in South-East Asia, should a land threat develop against Malaya.

28. Planning for home defence and also for defence of sea communications is now proceeding, but approval has not yet been granted to the planning for the possible employment of Australian forces in the Middle East or in South-East Asia. This approval would be an essential factor in determining the demands of the Australian Military War Effort on the civil economy. When Service plans become available, it will be possible to assess the Service demands on the National War Effort of Australia. It should then be possible to make a detailed examination of the manpower and material resources with a view to making an allocation of them to the main categories of the Australian War Effort (the three fighting Services, their supplies and equipment, civilian needs, main support area requirements, etc.).

RECOMMENDATIONS

29. In the light of the foregoing it is recommended that:

- a. In war, Australia should accept strategic responsibility –
 - (i) for the home defence of Australia and its Territories;
 - (ii) in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand, for the overall direction and control of operations, other than home defence, in an area which would approximate to the ANZAM Region.
- b. Approval should be given for regional planning to proceed on the basis that the proposed military regional defence organisation, known as the ANZAM Chiefs of Staff and consisting of the Australian Chiefs of Staff, and an accredited representative of each of the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff and the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff, functioning through the Australian Defence Machinery, will come into existence on the outbreak of war.
- c. Approval should be given for the development concurrently, of the plans to meet immediate and long term dangers recommended in the paper on "The Basic Objectives of British Commonwealth Defence Policy and General Strategy". These plans should be based on both the following alternatives:
 - (i) Deployment in the Middle East of the first army contingent and air force task force raised, with provision for later forces to be allotted to Malaya, should the possible threat develop;
 - (ii) Deployment in Malaya of the first army contingent and air force task force raised, with provision for later forces, not required in Malaya, to be allotted to the Middle East.