

Present measures should first of all provide for the prohibition of exports of commodities which we need to conserve for our own war purposes. Secondly, they should ration supplies to Japan of commodities which may otherwise be passed on to Germany. This subject should be examined by the economic sections of the Governments concerned.

Measures in the nature of reprisals raise very difficult questions. Pinpricks are useless and unwise. Blacklisting a company, not upon evidence of trade with the enemy but as a reprisal, would be merely irritating and provocative. Termination twelve months hence of a trade treaty would be a gesture of annoyance on our part, producing no effect in Japan except irritation. Such measures ought to be taken as a counter to *similar* measures (if any) by Japan, but should not, I think, be contemplated as reprisals for some military and economic action by Japan in the southern regions. Reprisals should, if adopted, be such as to inflict real injury upon Japan and to cause real delay to her preparedness measures. But they should not be measures which can be readily evaded by merely turning to another uncontrolled source of supply. Moreover such reprisals should be applied only in full appreciation that they may precipitate the use of force by Japan and therefore if we were satisfied that a stage has been reached where Japan's further advance must be stopped even at the risk of war. But some measures which could operate as reprisals could be defended as necessary self protection so that they would not appear merely to be reprisals. If we introduced measures which are obviously merely reprisals, we enter into a danger area where we must be able to see our way through. We should, from the point of view both of the Empire as a whole and from the point of view of the strengthening of the defenses of Australia as a part of the Empire, avoid precipitating war. Australia wants more time for development of aeroplanes and munitions production, and any postponement of hostilities is desirable. The satisfaction of making some small reprisal which may lead to war should not be allowed to affect policy in so important a matter.

1276.

King Papers, PAC

*Mémorandum du Premier ministre**Memorandum by Prime Minister*

[Ottawa,] April 28, 1941

CANADIAN-JAPANESE TRADE, WHEAT AND WOOD

I had a lengthy interview with Mr. Yoshizawa in my office at the House of Commons, between 5.30 and 7. The Minister had just returned from a visit to Washington where he had been in conference with the Japanese Ambassador to Washington. I had been absent in the United States when the Minister