

- (b) Reasons for undertaking Defence.
- (c) Scale and form of possible attacks.
- (d) System of Command and Statement of Garrison.

(A)—DESCRIPTION OF AREA TO BE DEFENDED

(i) *Objectives; Vulnerable Areas; Internal Communications.*

General

5. The only extensive road system is upon the Avalon Peninsula. A map (marked A)¹ showing the existing road system in this area is annexed. In other parts of the country there exist short stretches of road as shown on map (marked B)¹ of the Island annexed. Away from the roads practically the whole Island consists of rough uncultivated country, comprising rocky hills, more or less barren moors, extensive stretches of brush and scrub, occasional stretches of spruce and fir timber, and marshes, usually passable on foot, with many lakes large and small. There is little or no country over which small forces of infantry could not readily pass on foot at a slow speed, but away from the roads most of the country would be impassable for wheeled transport. There is very little level ground. There is but little cleared and cultivated land and that in small patches. For the benefit of authorities unacquainted with the Island, the coastal country may be described as not unlike that met with in the north-western portions of Scotland and the Hebrides. The interior, as it does not contain any military objectives whatever, is not material for the purposes of this document.

Possible Military Objectives

6. The Island is entirely undefended. The nerve centre of the Island, the only place where large property damage can be done, is the City of St. John's, population with suburbs about 47,000, which is the seat of Government, and the main centre of commercial operations. The town is in part relatively congested; and is built almost entirely of wood. It has on two occasions been for the most part burnt to the ground by accidental fire. If a conflagration were to be brought about by enemy action, the money loss would run into many millions of dollars, while the affairs of the Island would be very largely disorganised.

Vulnerable Areas connected with St. John's

7. About two-thirds of the town is in view from the sea and could be fired upon from ships by direct observation. The remainder could be fired upon by indirect observation if aeroplanes were available to the attacking force. Under suitable weather conditions a moderate number of incendiary shells could cause a complete conflagration.

The central transformer station serving the town and street car lines is situated close to the dry dock at the head of the harbour, and is not visible from the sea but is easily within range. The same applies to the dry dock itself and to the principal station of the Newfoundland Railway, including roundhouse, turn-table and open-air coal storage and freight sheds.

¹ Non reproduce.

¹ Not printed.