

No. 139.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR to Lieut.-General Sir D. A. CAMERON.

SIR,—

Government House, Auckland, 8th June, 1865.

In reference to your letter of yesterday's date, conveying to me instructions you had issued to Colonel Warre and to Colonel Logan, I venture to request that you will suspend such instructions until Her Majesty's Government have been heard from on the subject. It is with diffidence that I make such a request, but an experience of twenty-five years in matters of this nature satisfy me that you cannot give the orders you propose without doing that which is, I believe, without a precedent, and which will inflict real injury upon the service and upon Her Majesty's subjects. In the hope of inducing you to reconsider the conclusion at which you have arrived, I will state my reasons for holding the opinions I have above expressed.

In the case of Colonel Warre, he is the senior military officer in the Province of Taranaki. In that district for some time past, and I fear for some time to come, emergencies have arisen and are arising which have to be instantly met. You are yourself rarely resident in the Province of Taranaki, often at a considerable distance from it, with only unfrequent and often uncertain means of communication.

In all countries circumstanced as this is, where a Military Officer is in charge of a district, the authorities have, as far as my experience goes, been allowed freely to consult with such officers regarding the means which in any emergency they should take for their safety and protection. He has been regarded as the proper adviser upon such questions, and I do not think Her Majesty's subjects ought to be shut out from the benefit of his advice and experience whenever circumstances arise which render it expedient for him in his opinion to afford them the advantage of them. To do so might entail serious disaster or absolute ruin upon them. To order Colonel Warre not to afford them such an advantage when he thinks right to do so, is, I fear, to cast a serious slur either upon his discretion, his judgment, or his military knowledge.

An officer who for the lack of any of these qualities is not fit to be entrusted with such powers, and to whom Her Majesty's subjects may not look for advice and suggestions in a time of difficulty and danger, ought not in my opinion to be left in charge of the district.

In Colonel Warre's case I cannot imagine on what grounds it should be thought necessary to issue such orders to him.

His judgment and advice upon military affairs has hitherto been sound and good. I think it should not be lost sight of in the case of this correspondence between Colonel Warre and the Minister for Colonial Defence, that it did not relate to the establishment of military posts occupied by Her Majesty's troops, but to the location of settlers and friendly Natives, with a view to insuring the future safety of a British Colony.

In the case of Colonel Logan, I had no knowledge that Mr. Weld had written to him offering him an appointment under the Colonial Government, and I can assure you that I am not the proper person for Colonel Logan to communicate with on such a subject. I have nothing to do with Colonial appointments. It would be as proper to desire him, if he wished to know would it be in his power to obtain a consulship, to communicate direct with Her Majesty upon the subject instead of with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, as to order him to communicate with me, and not with the Colonial Secretary, if he wished to know if he might hope to obtain an appointment under the Colonial Government.

I believe that all officers have a right to communicate regarding what are their private affairs with the Colonial Government, and they cannot be prevented from so doing. The question of whether an officer should ultimately be allowed to leave the army to take an appointment under the Colonial Government is of course a different one, and rests with the military authorities.

I am sure that to give Colonel Logan the orders which you state you propose to do would be alike derogatory to my position and to that of the Colonial Ministers, and I believe it would be unjust to Colonel Logan.

I therefore earnestly request that such orders may be suspended until the instructions of Her Majesty's Government have been received.

Lieut.-General Sir D. A. Cameron, K.C.B.

I have, &c.,

G. GREY.

No. 140.

Lieut.-General Sir D. A. CAMERON to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

SIR,—

Head Quarters, Auckland, 9th June, 1865.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of yesterday's date, relative to certain orders which I informed you in my letter of the 7th instant I had considered it necessary to send to Colonel Warre and Lieut.-Colonel Logan.

I regret that I cannot reconcile it with my sense of duty to comply with your Excellency's request that I should suspend those orders, which I did not issue without due consideration.

I cannot consent to the principle that any member of the Colonial Government is at liberty to refer Military Questions, on behalf of the Colonial Government, to Officers commanding at out-stations, or that the latter should be allowed to give their opinions on such questions without my knowledge or sanction. Neither myself nor the officers under my command have properly any official relation whatever to the Colonial Government except through your Excellency; and whenever the Colonial Government require information or an opinion on any military question, it is for them to apply for it through your Excellency, and for your Excellency to refer it, when possible, to me. It is of course impossible to give Officers commanding at out-stations orders adapted to every emergency that may arise; and cases may sometimes occur (though the recent occasion at Taranaki cannot be considered one) which would justify an officer in deviating from the above rule of correspondence, when an indiscriminate adherence to it might prove injurious to the public service. I should hope that the officers under my command have sufficient judgment and good feeling to carry out the spirit of my orders and the rules