

MEMORANDUM OF MINISTERS ON LORD GRANVILLE'S DESPATCH, No. 35,  
OF 25TH MARCH, 1870.

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Wellington, 11th June, 1870.

MINISTERS have given the attention which it merits to Lord Granville's Despatch No. 35, of the 25th March, in which he comments on their Memorandum of the 7th January. His Lordship states that the question to which it refers had been very carefully considered by Her Majesty's Government, and a conclusion arrived at, before the representation on behalf of the Colony was received.

It would, on public grounds, have been more satisfactory if the consideration and the conclusion had followed, and not preceded, the representation made on behalf of the Colony.

Ministers attach to Lord Granville's declaration that Her Majesty's Government do not wish to abandon New Zealand, the weight to which so important a statement is entitled. They accept the assurance as meant to convey the feelings of the Cabinet at the time Lord Granville was writing. They cannot suppose that it in the least affects the accumulated evidence from different parts of the world, that Her Majesty's Ministers previously favoured a policy having for its end the more or less speedy disintegration of the Empire. It is gratifying to think that the representations made on behalf of the Colony may have had some share in leading to this change.

With reference to Earl Granville's remarks as to the reason for removing all the troops, Ministers would only observe that it is difficult to understand the political doctrine that civil war between the two races in New Zealand is a matter of Imperial unconcern, but that the Colony would be entitled to sympathy and aid in case of foreign war. More especially is such a doctrine unintelligible to loyal Natives, who are fighting for the Sovereign to whom they yielded allegiance on the faith of Her Royal pledge, "to protect their just rights and property, and to secure to them the enjoyment of peace and good order." It is also strange why "that rule which, with due consideration for circumstances, is in course of application to other Colonies," and "from which it is not for the true interest of the Colony itself that New Zealand should be made an exception," should have been enforced, in respect of New Zealand, in a manner which has evinced an entire want of consideration.

Ministers do not feel called upon to repeat arguments which they have already employed concerning questions of Colonial Policy; but it is their duty to express, in most respectful terms, their extreme regret that Lord Granville should have thought it necessary to state so positively and so publicly, opinions which he now admits may be right or may be wrong, knowing, as he must, that if those opinions were not shared by the Colonial Government, his expression of them would seriously embarrass those on whom, according to his own admission, the entire responsibility of dealing with the questions to which they related devolved.

To His Excellency the Governor.

WILLIAM FOX.

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