

1877.
NEW ZEALAND.

SIR W. JERVOIS'S PROPOSED VISIT TO REPORT ON
THE HARBOUR DEFENCES OF THE COLONY

(MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY, ENCLOSING MEMORANDA RELATIVE TO).

NORMANBY,
Governor.

MESSAGE.

THE Governor transmits to the House of Representatives the copy of a correspondence between the Governor and his Ministers on the subject of the visit of His Excellency Sir William Jervois to New Zealand, for the purpose of reporting upon the best means of defending the principal ports in the colony from foreign attack.

Government House,
Wellington, 3rd December, 1877.

No. 1.

MEMORANDUM for the Hon. Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B.

THE Governor presents his compliments to Sir George Grey, and requests to be informed by Ministers what answer they would wish him to send to the enclosed letter from His Excellency Sir William Jervois on the subject of his visit to New Zealand, for the purpose of reporting upon the defences of the colony.

Government House, Wellington, 24th November, 1877.

NORMANBY.

Enclosure in No. 1.

COPY of a LETTER from His Excellency Sir W. F. D. JERVOIS to His Excellency the GOVERNOR of New Zealand.

DEAR LORD NORMANBY,—

Government House, Adelaide, 15th October, 1877.

In accordance with my note of 16th July, I propose visiting New Zealand, to report upon defence of harbours, about the middle or the third week of December next, beginning at the south, and working northwards by Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, &c.

It would greatly facilitate my movements if the "Hinemoa"—I believe that is the name of the steamer belonging to your Government—can be sent to Hobart Town for me, and I would feel exceedingly obliged if you will do anything in your power to afford me this facility. I will let you know, further, as to the precise day on which I propose leaving Hobart Town.

Meanwhile please telegraph to me if the "Hinemoa" can be sent for me.

WM. F. DRUMMOND JERVOIS.

His Excellency the Marquis of Normanby, G.C.M.G., &c.

No. 2.

MEMORANDUM for His EXCELLENCY.

MINISTERS present their respectful compliments to the Marquis of Normanby, and thank him for forwarding a copy of the letter from Sir William Jervois on the subject of his visit to New Zealand, for the purpose of reporting on the defences of the colony.

Ministers regret that the services of the "Hinemoa" being required here, it is not in their power to send that vessel to Hobart Town, with a view to her being placed at the disposal of Sir William Jervois.

Wellington, 28th November, 1877.

G. GREY.

No. 3.

COPY of TELEGRAM from His Excellency the GOVERNOR of New Zealand to His Excellency Sir W. F. D. JERVOIS.

"New Zealand, 29th November, 1877.

"GOVERNMENT will be unable to send 'Hinemoa' to Hobart Town. Regret delay in answering.

"Please telegraph when you start.

"NORMANBY."

No. 4.

MEMORANDA on covering sheet to Telegram.

THE Governor requests Ministers will inform him as to the answer they would wish him to return to the enclosed telegram. The Governor thinks it would be right to grant the request.

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MINISTERS regret that the "Hinemoa," as they have already said, is required for other purposes.

G. GREY.

Enclosure to No. 4.

COPY of TELEGRAM received by His Excellency the GOVERNOR of New Zealand from His Excellency Sir W. F. D. JERVOIS.

"Adelaide, 29th November.

"CAN your Government place 'Hinemoa' at my disposal during January, to visit your ports, commencing at Bluff?

"H.E. Sir W. F. D. JERVOIS,
"Governor."

No. 5.

MEMORANDUM for the Hon. Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B.

THE Governor presents his compliments to Sir George Grey, and, in reply to the Memorandum of Ministers, in which they state that the services of the "Hinemoa" cannot be given to His Excellency Sir William Jervois during the time that he is employed in examining and reporting on the defences of Dunedin, Lyttelton, Wellington, and Auckland Harbours, during the month of January, the Governor would point out that the services of Sir William Jervois and Colonel Scratchley were obtained through the Secretary of State at the request of the late Government [Memorandum, 17th May, 1877], on the understanding that the remuneration to Sir William Jervois and Colonel Scratchley should be at the same rate as that paid by the Australian colonies.

The Governor would observe that the harbours to be examined are large, and that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the work to be properly completed without the officers employed having a special steamer at their disposal.

The Governor would wish also to point out that some consideration is due to the position of Sir William Jervois as the Governor of a neighbouring colony, visiting New Zealand not for his own pleasure, but at the request and for the service of this colony.

The Governor would imply, from the curt answer of Ministers to the request made by Sir William Jervois for the use of the "Hinemoa," that they do not approve of the object for which he is about to visit the colony. Should such be the case, if Ministers will state their wishes in writing, the Governor will at once communicate with Sir William Jervois, and request him to put off his visit; but, if the work is to proceed, the Governor can conceive no service on which the "Hinemoa" could be more properly employed, and Ministers have not informed him of any special services which would prevent her being so employed.

The Governor would request a reply as soon as possible, as he must communicate with Sir William Jervois at once.

Government House, Wellington, 1st December, 1877.

NORMANBY.

Enclosure in No. 5.

MEMORANDUM for His EXCELLENCY.

MINISTERS understand that two officers of the Royal Engineers are now in Australia, to report upon the best means of defending the principal seaport towns, those officers having been specially selected for the duty in compliance with an application from some of the Australian Governments, the arrangement being that, while so engaged, the officers shall receive salaries at the rate of £1,500 and £1,000 a year respectively, and shall have all their expenses paid.

2. It is very desirable that the principal ports of New Zealand should be similarly reported upon.

3. Ministers respectfully ask, therefore, that His Excellency will communicate with the Governors of Victoria and New South Wales, with a view of securing that the two officers shall, as soon as convenient, visit this colony for that purpose; this Government joining in the arrangement as to salaries and expenses.

Wellington, 17th May, 1877.

H. A. ATKINSON.

No. 6.

MEMORANDUM for His EXCELLENCY.

MINISTERS present their respectful compliments to the Marquis of Normanby. They regret that the Governor should have regarded their reply to his Memorandum respecting Sir William Jervois as being curt. They wrote amidst the hurry of a great pressure of business; and they intended that their answer should be in every respect courteous.

2. Ministers were not aware, until they received the Governor's Memorandum, that it might be in their power to dispense with the visit of Sir William Jervois to New Zealand; but the state of the finances of the colony at present is such, that it is their duty to avoid expenditure wherever it is possible to do so. They feel satisfied that New Zealand could not at this moment incur any large expenditure on public works for the defence of the many harbours of the colony. They might, possibly, with but little warning, have to make provision for resisting an internal enemy, who might prove much more dangerous than any external foe. The best means of providing against such an internal enemy is the expenditure of funds in civilizing the Natives, opening up the country by means of roads, encouraging settlement in Native districts, and otherwise promoting friendly relations between the two races. They would, therefore, prefer to apply any funds available for defensive purposes to those objects, rather than to devote such funds to costly works meant for resisting a foreign enemy. For the latter purpose, they trust confidently to the fleets of Great Britain, which they feel satisfied will never allow a foreign enemy to dominate in these seas.

3. Under all the circumstances, therefore, whilst regretting that they cannot avail themselves of the valuable services of so distinguished an officer as Sir William Jervois, if it is possible, without any uncourteousness on their part, to delay his visit until a time when the colony may be in a better financial position, Ministers would feel greatly obliged to the Governor if he would make such a communication to Sir William Jervois as may be the means of postponing his visit to New Zealand.

Wellington, 3rd December, 1877.

G. GREY.

No. 7.

MEMORANDUM for the Hon. Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B.

THE Governor presents his compliments to Sir George Grey, and begs to acknowledge the receipt of his Memorandum of this day's date, in which Ministers inform him that, in consequence of the financial condition of the colony, they advise the Governor to communicate with His Excellency Sir William Jervois, and to request him to postpone indefinitely his visit to New Zealand.

The Governor will at once comply with the advice given to him by Ministers, but he must, at the same time, express his deep regret that they should have felt it their duty to come to such a decision, as he fears it is one which is little calculated to raise the credit of the colony abroad.

The fleets of Great Britain will, no doubt, in the event of war perform their duty as they have always done, but it is manifestly impossible that England, even if she were disposed so to do, should keep sufficient ships in these seas to secure at all times her various possessions from the attack of small expeditions, or of a single ship or privateer; and it is in the Governor's opinion clearly the duty of each colony to make such provisions as they may consider necessary for that purpose.

The question is one of public importance, and the Governor will feel it his duty to lay this correspondence before Parliament without delay.

Government House, 3rd December, 1877.

NORMANBY.

No. 8.

MEMORANDUM for the Hon. Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B.

THE Governor presents his compliments to Sir George Grey, and requests that he will be good enough to lay the accompanying Message, containing the correspondence on the subject of Sir William Jervois's visit to New Zealand, on the table of the House with as little delay as possible.

Government House, Wellington, 3rd December, 1877.

NORMANBY.

No. 9.

MEMORANDUM for His EXCELLENCY.

SIR GEORGE GREY presents his respectful compliments to the Marquis of Normanby.

2. The Governor has stated as his opinion that the question relating to Sir William Jervois's proposed visit to New Zealand is one of public importance, and that His Excellency will feel it his duty to lay the correspondence relating thereto before Parliament without delay.

3. The Governor has, further, in pursuance of that intention, transmitted to Sir George Grey a Message to the House of Representatives on the subject referred to, and requested him to lay that Message on the table of the House of Representatives.

4. Sir George Grey feels it, under these circumstances, to be his duty to obey His Excellency's commands; and he will lay the Governor's Message before the House of Representatives on their meeting this evening.

Wellington, 3rd December, 1877.

G. GREY.

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