

This would seem to indicate an indefinite postponement of the meeting, which, under all the circumstances, is to be deeply regretted. The fact that you, like all the other Colonies, had accepted Sir T. McIlwraith's suggestion for a Convention was taken by me, and no doubt by him, as an indication that you meant to attend at *some convenient time*; and in sending a circular telegram to the other Colonies, I was influenced by a desire to consult as far as possible the convenience of all.

But now, when you put it that you cannot name a time, or any time, it seems to render the Convention at present impossible. This I think is to be greatly deplored; it will cast a damper over the movement throughout the whole of the Colonies, and will be regarded in England as an evidence that we are not all truly in earnest. My own feeling is that the occasion is one which would have justified the adjournment of the Parliament of any Colony for a fortnight.

I wish you would think over the matter again, and devise some means to go on. New South Wales is too important a factor in the Conference to be done without, but I think the other Colonies will scarcely be able to help feeling that, after being led up to the very point of fixing a date for the Convention, the whole thing is knocked on the head by New South Wales backing out of the agreement. I hope that you will see it in this light, and enable me by a quick wire on receipt yet to fix a suitable time.

Yours truly,
JAMES SERVICE.

No. 28.

The Premier of Tasmania to The Colonial Secretary of New South Wales.

Sir,

Premier's Office, Hobart, 29 August, 1883.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd instant, in reply to mine of the 3rd. * * * * *

I desire to thank you for the copies of your exceedingly interesting and valuable letter to Sir Thomas McIlwraith, and also for the copy of your despatch to Lord Loftus, on the subject of the annexation of New Guinea.

I may mention that I have informed Mr. Service that, if the proposed Conference is held in September, it is not likely that this Government can be represented; but that if the Conference is held in October, or later, we should wish to take part. The Premier of New Zealand has intimated, in reply to a message from me, that his Government proposes to send two delegates, and has wired Mr. Service that October will suit his Government. Should the Conference be fixed for the later date suggested, this Government would propose to send two delegates (as New Zealand intends to send only two), and not four as suggested by Mr. Service.

I have, &c.,
W. R. GIBLIN.

No. 29.

Telegram from Premier of Victoria to Colonial Secretary of New South Wales.

Melbourne, 31 August, 1883.

Would holding Convention in Sydney help out of present difficulty? I am prepared to ask our Parliament to adjourn for a fortnight, if necessary, end of September or beginning October.

No. 30.

Telegram from Colonial Secretary of New South Wales to Premier of Victoria.

Sydney, 31 August, 1883.

BE assured we have no desire to put a damper on views or wishes of the other Colonies. Your telegram to-day removes our difficulty of interfering with meeting of our Parliament, but apparently November suits South Australia and Tasmania better; moreover, grave constitutional difficulty appears to us to exist regarding Queensland meeting at present time, as her Government is under appeal to country. She was first to move in this matter, and her interests are, perhaps, more involved in New Guinea annexation question than those of any other Colony.

No. 31.

Telegram from Premier of Victoria to Colonial Secretary of New South Wales.

Melbourne, 31 August, 1883.

I THINK Queensland can probably surmount difficulty you mention. Am wiring there now, and will advise you reply. I must of course communicate again with South Australia and Tasmania, but before doing so let me know the limits of your convenience. Can I fix any time now that will suit others, or must we meet before your Parliament opens, and if so when will that be?

No. 32.

The Colonial Secretary of New South Wales to The Premier of Victoria.

My dear Mr. Service,

Sydney, 31 August, 1883.

I have to-day replied by telegram to your letter of 29th received this morning, and to your telegram of this day.

I and my colleagues have not held such strong views as you and Mr. McIlwraith upon the necessity of immediate federative action in formulating a system of Federal Government, merely because the Imperial Government has not seen its way to fall in at once with the action of Queensland in regard to annexation; but we have no wish to prevent in any way the fullest discussion of the whole question, when such is the evident wish of so many of our neighbours.