

1884.

NEW ZEALAND.

CONFEDERATION AND ANNEXATION.

(CORRESPONDENCE UPON THE QUESTIONS GENERALLY.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

Governor Sir W. F. D. JERVOIS, G.C.M.G. C.B. to the Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, June 16, 1883.

With reference to the telegram which I transmitted to your Lordship on the 9th instant, on the subject of the desirability of the establishment of British rule over the New Hebrides and other islands of the Pacific, I am desirous of laying before your Lordship the special reasons why it appears to me that such action would be beneficial to the Australasian Colonies, and should be carried into effect without unnecessary delay, although, of course, much anxious consideration will be required before taking so serious a step.

2. The distance between these colonies and the possessions of any other European Power (with the single exception of the French island of New Caledonia) is at present one of the principal reasons for their comparative security from foreign attack. It is believed here, that this state of things will in all probability ere long be changed, as more than one Power is understood to be desirous of taking possession of some of these islands, which might, in the event of a European war, become a base for hostile operations, and at other times be a constant source of jealousy and inconvenience.

3. The trade between the Islands and Australasia is already considerable, and likely, in all probability, rapidly to increase. It is almost impossible that, in this event, the Islands should remain permanently in the hands of uncivilized races, and the only alternative will be the occupation by England or some other maritime nation.

4. Much inconvenience has already been felt (as your Lordship is doubtless aware) in these colonies, by New Caledonia being used as a penal settlement. It is, unfortunately, too often the fate of French and other foreign colonial possessions to become convict establishments; and there is a fear prevailing here that the New Hebrides and other islands may be thus used, and that there will be an influx into Australasia of liberated and escaped convicts, the most undesirable of all immigrants.

5. I need hardly point out to your Lordship that these colonies, rapidly increasing, as they are, in wealth and population, would be well able, in future, to undertake the management and protection of the Islands. Indeed, I believe that having to do so would be beneficial to them, as encouraging a feeling in favour of Federation, to which intercolonial free-trade would be an incident, and making them realize more fully the fact of the necessity for their providing for their own self-defence.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby.

WM. F. DRUMMOND JERVOIS.

No. 2.

The PREMIER, Tasmania, to the PREMIER, Victoria.

SIR,—

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

With reference to the proposal that Great Britain should take steps to prevent the New Hebrides and other South Sea Islands from being taken possession of by any Foreign Power, I observe, from the public prints, and from a telegram addressed by you to the Chief Secretary of this colony, that you are of opinion that the Australasian Colonies, as a whole, should urge on the Imperial authorities the annexation to the British Empire of these islands, and should agree to defray the cost of their government.

It appears to me that any cost attending the maintenance of order, in any islands which the British Government might think proper to take possession of, should be borne by the particular colony to which they might be attached, and which would reap any commercial or fiscal advantage

NOTE.—So much of this paper as does not refer to New Zealand has been extracted from Imperial Blue Books,

which might hereafter accrue from the annexation. At any rate, as at present advised, I could not recommend the Government of this colony to accept any share of such a responsibility. I cannot help thinking that, under existing circumstances, it would be better for the Australasian Colonies to confine their representation to the prevention of annexation by any Foreign Power, until the experiment of colonizing New Guinea, and even of Fiji, shall have been more fully developed.

I have, &c.

Hon. James Service, Premier, Victoria.

W. R. GIBLIN.

No. 3.

The PREMIER, Victoria, to the PREMIER, Tasmania.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Melbourne, July 11, 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th June, in reply to the communications addressed by this Government to that of Tasmania, on the subject of the proposal for the Annexation of, or the establishment of a protectorate over, the New Hebrides and neighbouring islands.

I feel greatly obliged for the frank expression of your views with which you have favoured me; but I am so impressed with the grave, indeed critical, importance of the question for this group of colonies, that I venture to ask you to re-look at the matter, before regarding it as finally disposed of.

As a ground for further consideration, I would point out that the proposal to which assent is asked is not quite of the character objected to in your letter. It is not that the Islands, or either of them, should be attached to any particular colony, in which case I quite concur with you that it would be equitable that the colony should bear the burden of the expense. The measure proposed, however, merely is that Great Britain should take possession of, or establish a protectorate over, the Islands; and, as this would be mainly, if not solely, in the interests of the existing colonies, it seems only just that they should bear the cost, or, at the least, a part of the cost. The amount of this might be apportioned in relation to the population—or the revenue—of each colony, and the burden, thus divided, would be not only small, but, as compared with the advantages, infinitesimal.

I shall be very glad if you will look at the question from this point of view, for the purpose of, if possible, recommending your Cabinet to agree with the other colonies in sharing the expense of the proposed action.

In our future, this question must exercise a considerable influence upon commerce, and it may prove that the matter of naval and military establishments will come to be almost governed by the favourable or adverse possession of these Islands.

On all these grounds I would strongly urge the importance of all the colonies joining in a unanimous utterance on the subject. The question forms a national one for Australasia, and one with regard to which unanimity must greatly augment her dignity and her influence abroad.

I have, &c.

The Hon. the Premier, Hobart.

JAMES SERVICE,
Premier.

No. 4.

The PREMIER, Tasmania, to the PREMIER, Victoria.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Hobart, July 16, 1883.

See also A.—3,
Appendix D,
p. 74.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 170, of the 11th instant, and of your telegram of the same, as to the New Guinea and Pacific Islands question.

This Government is very desirous to act in harmony with the other colonies in all matters of Australasian concern, and I will therefore willingly bring the matter before the Cabinet for reconsideration, with a view to see how far we can assist the larger colonies, by asking our Parliament (which meets on the 24th instant) to adopt an Address from both Houses, urging Her Majesty's Government to take such steps as may be most effectual to prevent the acquisition of any of the Islands referred to by any Foreign Power, whether those steps involved a protectorate or annexation, or some third course of action.

As to the question of expenses, I presume, in the case of a protectorate, they would be almost nominal; but if Annexation involves the governing, according to English ideas, of a considerable number of islands scattered over vast tracks of ocean, and inhabited by men speaking very various dialects, and of widely-different degrees of civilization, I confess myself unable to even approximate the cost of maintaining law and order on such territories and under such conditions. Nevertheless, as you justly suggest, if the cost were apportioned amongst the Australasian Colonies according to either revenue or population, our share would be but small, as compared to the advantages which might be expected to accrue to the Australasian group.

I have, &c.

The Hon. the Premier, Melbourne.

W. R. GIBLIN.

No. 5.

Governor Sir W. F. D. JERVOIS, G.C.M.G. C.B. to the Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, August 11, 1883.

No. 1.

With reference to my despatch of the 16th June last, concerning Pacific Islands Annexation, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the subject is being considered by the

Parliament of this colony. I herewith transmit extracts from the Parliamentary debates bearing on the question.

2. On the 26th June, the Premier, Mr. Whitaker, moved the following resolutions in the Legislative Council:—

“That this Council approves of the steps taken by the Government, in conjunction with other of the Australian Colonies, to promote the establishment of British rule in certain Islands of the Pacific.

“That this Council undertakes, for its part, to give effect to any assurance that may be required by the Imperial Government, that this colony will, in common with the other colonies of Australasia, bear a fair share of the necessary expenses.”

These resolutions were, after some debate, carried without a division.

3. It having been discovered that such resolutions, if passed by both Houses, might involve the colony in a technical difficulty, the Treasurer, Major Atkinson (who is the leader of the Government in the House of Representatives), moved in that House, on the 3rd July, “that a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report upon” resolutions similar to those passed in the Council. This was agreed to.

4. On the 4th July, a Bill on the same subject, which had been introduced by Sir George Grey (copies herewith), was read a second time in the House of Representatives, and was referred to the Select Committee already appointed to consider the resolutions.

5. On the 17th July, the Committee presented their report on the resolutions and Bill.

6. This report was, after some debate, put into the form of four paragraphs, which were considered by the House on the 26th July. The paragraphs were as follow:—

“(1.) That the steps taken up to this time by the Government, in conjunction with other of the Australasian Colonies, to promote the establishment of British rule in certain Islands of the Pacific, be approved.

“(2.) That the British Government should, under existing circumstances, take steps for the establishment of its rule over all Islands in the Pacific which are not already occupied by, or under the protectorate of, a Foreign Power; and that, on Annexation of any island taking place, care should be taken that provision be made for preserving the individual rights of the inhabitants.

“(3.) That, in the event of the British Government making it one of the conditions of establishing its authority over any Islands in the Pacific, New Zealand, jointly with the Colonies of Australia, should contribute its fair proportion of necessary expense, calculated on the basis of European populations of the British colonies now comprised in Australasia: provided that the amount of such proportionate expenditure, when ascertained, does not exceed the means at the disposal of New Zealand.

“(4.) That the Confederation and Annexation Bill, with the amendment proposed by the Committee, be passed by the House, and that the papers named in the Schedule laid by the Colonial Treasurer before the Committee, relating to the Annexation of Islands in the Pacific, together with such other papers relating to the subject as Government can supply, be printed, for the information of Parliament.”

7. The general opinion appeared to be that the terms of the resolutions were too wide, partly because they included all the Islands of the Pacific, and partly because they bound New Zealand to bear a share of the cost, without defining how large a sum might be required. Resolutions 2 and 3 were, therefore, amended as follows:—

“(2.) That the British Government should, under existing circumstances, take steps for the establishment of its rule over such Islands in the Pacific as are not already occupied by, or under the protectorate of, a Foreign Power, and the occupation of which by any Foreign Power would be detrimental to the interests of Australasia.

“(3.) That, in the event of its being made an absolute condition of Annexation that the Colonies of Australasia shall each contribute a fair proportion of the cost, it would be necessary that a statement of the amount to be provided by this colony should be furnished by the Imperial Government, before Parliament was called upon to agree in a course which may involve a serious addition to the taxation of the colony.”

Resolutions 1 and 4 were passed without alteration.

8. On the following day, Sir George Grey's Bill was passed by the House of Representatives. It is now under discussion in the Legislative Council, and there appears to be no doubt but that it will be passed.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby.

WM. F. DRUMMOND JERVOIS.

No. 6.

Governor Sir G. C. STRAHAN, K.C.M.G. to the Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Hobart, September 4, 1883.

In continuation of my despatch of 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship six copies of a joint Address, from both Houses of Parliament to Her Majesty, with reference to the Annexation of New Guinea and the adjoining islands.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby.

GEO. C. STRAHAN.

Enclosure.

TO HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,—

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the members of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly, in Parliament assembled, humbly pray that your Majesty may be pleased forthwith to take such effectual measures as will prevent the Island of New Guinea, or any of the Islands of the South Pacific lying between New Guinea and Fiji (including the New Hebrides, New Ireland, and New Britain), from being taken possession of by any Foreign Power, either for the formation of a penal settlement, or for purposes of colonization.

THOS. D. CHAPMAN,

President of the Legislative Council.

HENRY BUTLER,

Speaker of the House of Assembly.

No. 7.

Governor Sir W. F. D. JERVOIS, G.C.M.G. C.B. to the Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, September 8, 1883.

I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of "The Confederation and Annexation Act, 1883," which has been passed by both Houses of the New Zealand Legislature.

2. Although, as your Lordship will observe, the powers conferred by the Act are of a very limited character, the duty of the Commissioners for whose appointment it provides being merely to report to the New Zealand Legislature, and no action can be taken on their recommendations without the consent of Her Majesty, yet, as bearing on a matter of Imperial policy, I have decided, in accordance with the recommendation of my Ministers, to reserve the Bill for the Royal assent.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby.

WM. F. DRUMMOND JERVOIS.

No. 8.

The AGENT-GENERAL for VICTORIA to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

MY LORD,—

8, Victoria Chambers, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W. October 5, 1883.

I have the honour to inform you that I have received, by the last mail, a despatch from the Hon. the Premier of Victoria, and that, since its arrival, I have received a further telegraphic despatch from Mr. Service, very strongly urging me to impress upon your Lordship the sense of Her Majesty's Colonial Ministers, that it is eminently to be desired, in view of the Convention of the Australasian Governments which will assemble at Sydney next month, that a clear understanding with Her Majesty's Imperial Government should be attained in respect to the conditions on which the Confederation of the colonies, as advised by your Lordship, should proceed, and also the method in which the necessary measures of protectorate or Annexation in the Western Pacific should be approached. I am, accordingly, to invite your Lordship to state, for the information of my Government, on what general conditions Her Majesty's Imperial Government will be prepared to give their assent to the Annexation of the Western Pacific Islands which have been sufficiently indicated in previous correspondence. I am further to request your Lordship, having reference to your observation to the deputation of the Agents-General, last June, that the Annexation should be preceded by a Federation of the Colonies, to state whether, if the colonies do become federally united, the Imperial sanction to the Annexation will then be granted, or whether it will be granted on the colonies simply agreeing to provide for the expense of the proceeding. In the telegraphic despatch to which I have above referred, received only this morning, I am further instructed to ask your Lordship whether an estimate can be prepared at the Colonial Office, in anticipation of the meeting of the Convention, of the cost of those measures, or, it may be, at least, of such as are indicated in the latter paragraphs of your despatch to the Officer Administering the Government of Queensland, of the 11th of July last.

See A.-3, No.
21, p. 89.

The brief period which now remains before the assembly of the Convention, and the momentous decisions at which it is called upon to arrive, both in regard to the political constitution proper for the Australasian Dominion, and the extension of territory necessary to provide for it adequate and secure boundaries, will, I hope, justify me in requesting your immediate and earnest attention to the questions which I am instructed by my Government to submit to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby.

ROBERT MURRAY SMITH.

No. 9.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the AGENT-GENERAL for VICTORIA.

SIR,—

Downing Street, October 22, 1883.

I am directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, in which, at the request of the Government of Victoria, His Lordship is invited to state, more fully, the views of Her Majesty's Government on certain questions connected with the subject of the proposed Annexation of various Islands in the Western Pacific Ocean.

You ask,—

- (1.) On what general conditions Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to assent to the Annexation of the Islands in question?
- (2.) If the Australian Colonies were to become confederated, would the Annexation of the Islands be allowed, or would it be allowed on the simple agreement of the colonies concerned to provide for the expense of the proceedings?
- (3.) Can an estimate be given of the cost of the measures indicated at the conclusion of Lord See A.-3, No. Derby's despatch to the Officer Administering the Government of Queensland of the 11th²¹, p. 89. of July last?

In reply to the first of these questions, I am to observe that it was explained in the letter See A.-3, addressed, on the 31st of August last, to you and other Agents-General, that there are obstacles to the Annexation by Great Britain of some of the Western Pacific Islands, and that, with regard to others, Her Majesty's Government are not of opinion that their Annexation, with all its attendant expenses and responsibilities, is necessary at the present time. Her Majesty's Government will, of course, be prepared to give their best consideration to the views of the Australian Governments, after those Governments have more fully considered the whole subject at the approaching Conference; but it is obvious that Her Majesty's Government are not now in a position to define any conditions on which they will be prepared to assent to Annexation. p. 128.

(2.) If the colonies should decide, either upon Confederation, or upon united action in regard to this particular question, there would, undoubtedly, be much less difficulty than at present in arranging for the transfer to them of the obligations of this country in respect of neighbouring native communities; but it is not possible to say, without full consideration of the manner in which the Confederated Colonies would propose to discharge their obligations, whether Annexation could be agreed to. If the colonies, at the approaching Conference, decide that the Annexation of some of the islands is desirable, Her Majesty's Government would be willing to discuss all details fully with the Agents-General or other colonial representatives, and to consider whether and how far Annexation would be justifiable and practicable.

(3.) With respect to the last point raised in your letter, it does not appear to Lord Derby to be possible to give an approximate estimate of the probable cost of strengthening the staff of the High Commissioner on the coast of New Guinea, as proposed in the last paragraph of His Lordship's despatch to the Governor of Queensland of the 11th July. If the authority and protection of the High Commissioner is to be effectively extended over other important islands or groups of islands, as well as over the coasts of New Guinea, a considerable number of officers, with adequate provision for their safety, and for means enabling them to communicate with some Australasian colony, would have to be maintained. The cost of such arrangements could hardly fail to amount to some thousands of pounds annually, even if the area to be supervised were limited; but it is feared that any attempt to state it more precisely might tend to mislead.

I am, &c.

The Agent-General for Victoria.

JOHN BRAMSTON.

No. 10.

The Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY to Governor Sir W. F. D. JERVOIS, G.C.M.G. C.B.

SIR,—

Downing Street, November 6, 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 8th September last, forwarding copies of the Bill entitled "The Confederation and Annexation Act, 1883," which has been passed by the Legislative Houses of New Zealand, and reserved by you for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure.

This Bill will receive the careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government, but Her Majesty will not be finally advised with respect to it until after the approaching Conference on the subject of the Western Pacific Islands has been held.

I have, &c.

DERBY.

Sir W. F. D. Jervois.

No. 11.

The FOREIGN OFFICE to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

SIR,—

Foreign Office, November 30, 1883.

I am directed by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to you, to be laid before the Earl of Derby, copy of a letter from the Hawaiian Minister for Foreign Affairs, enclosing a protest against Annexation of Polynesian Islands by Foreign Powers, which was referred to in the letter from this Department of September 21st.

I have, &c.

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

J. PAUNCEFOTE.

Enclosure.

MY LORD,—

Department for Foreign Affairs, Honolulu, August 27, 1883.

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, the protest of His Hawaiian Majesty's Government against certain proposed extensions of foreign dominion among the Islands of the Pacific, and against any further annexations of independent Polynesian States by alien Powers.

This Government is emboldened to hope that this protest, and appeal for a permanent guarantee of independence to the native communities of Polynesia, will find favour with the Government of Great Britain, from the remarks made in Parliament by your Lordship's right honourable colleague the Earl of Derby. His Lordship is reported to have said (on 2nd July last), "We

shall be prepared to strengthen the hands of those charged with preserving order in the Pacific Islands, and we shall consider, with the colonies, the different means for better securing the order of the country, so far as the British adventurers are concerned. It may be said, 'It is quite true that you may get jurisdiction over the natives, but you will have no jurisdiction over foreigners.' It would seldom be necessary to exercise jurisdiction over the natives, if their rights and their lands were not interfered with." The concluding words of this extract go to the root of the matter, and sustain, better than any argument on my part can, the protest which I now respectfully present to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

The Earl Granville, K.G.

WALTER M. GIBSON,
Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Sub-Enclosure.

WHEREAS His Hawaiian Majesty's Government, being informed that certain sovereign and colonial States propose to annex various islands and archipelagoes of Polynesia, does hereby solemnly protest against such projects of annexation, as unjust to a simple and ignorant people, and subversive, in their case, of those conditions for favourable national development which have been so happily accorded to the Hawaiian nation.

The Hawaiian people, enjoying the blessings of national independence, confirmed by the joint action of great and magnanimous States, ever ready to afford favourable opportunities for self-government, cannot be silent about or indifferent to acts of intervention in contiguous and kindred groups, which menace their own situation.

The Hawaiian people, encouraged by favourable political conditions, have cultivated and entertained a strong national sentiment, which leads them not only to cherish their own political State, but also inspires them with a desire to have extended to kindred, yet less favoured, communities of Polynesia like favourable political opportunities for national development.

And whereas a Hawaiian Legislative Assembly, expressing unanimously the spirit of the nation, has declared that it was the duty of His Hawaiian Majesty's Government to proffer to kindred peoples and States of the Pacific an advising assistance to aid them in securing opportunities for improving their political and social condition: His Hawaiian Majesty's Government, responding to the national will, and to the especial appeals of several Polynesian Chiefs, has sent a Special Commissioner to several of the Polynesian Chieftains and States to advise them in their national affairs.

And His Hawaiian Majesty's Government, speaking for the Hawaiian people, so happily prospering through national independence, makes earnest appeal to the Governments of great and enlightened States, that they will recognize the inalienable right of the several native communities of Polynesia to enjoy opportunities for progress and self-government, and will guarantee to them the same favourable political opportunities which have made Hawaii prosperous and happy, and which incite her national spirit to lift up a voice among the nations in behalf of sister islands and groups of Polynesia.

By order of His Majesty in Council.

Iolani Palace, Honolulu, August 23, 1883.

No. 12.

Governor the Right Hon. Lord A. LOFTUS, G.C.B. to the Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY.

THE Intercolonial Convention is somewhat disturbed by a telegram of this morning, stating that the French Government declare that France has claims in the Pacific beyond the recognized area. The Convention consider it important to ascertain what foundation there may be for this telegram, as it may greatly affect their resolutions. They are most anxious not to embarrass Her Majesty's Government with France. Telegraph reply as soon as possible.

Sydney, December 3.

No. 13.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the FOREIGN OFFICE.

SIR,—

Downing Street, December 4, 1883.

I am directed by the Earl of Derby to transmit to you, to be laid before Earl Granville, the accompanying paraphrase of a telegram from the Governor of New South Wales, respecting the Intercolonial Convention now sitting at Sydney.

I am to request that you will move Lord Granville to cause inquiry to be made, at his earliest convenience, of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, as to whether he is aware of anything which could give rise to the rumour referred to in this telegram, that France had put forth fresh claims in the Pacific Ocean "beyond the recognized area."

Lord Derby has informed Lord A. Loftus, in reply, that he is not aware of any such new claims, but that he has requested Lord Granville to make inquiries of Lord Lyons on the subject.

I am, &c.

The Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office.

ROBERT G. W. HERBERT.

No. 14.

The Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY to Governor the Right Hon. Lord A. LOFTUS, G.C.B.
RESOLUTIONS of Convention will receive early and careful consideration.

London, December 7.

No. 15.

The Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY to Governor the Right Hon. Lord A. LOFTUS, G.C.B.
 NOTHING known Paris new French claims Pacific. London, December 11.

No. 16.

The Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY to Governor the Right Hon. Lord A. LOFTUS, G.C.B.
 Yours fifth. Are you sending any further telegram Conference? London, December 12.

No. 17.

Governor the Right Hon. Lord A. LOFTUS, G.C.B. to the Right Hon. the Earl of DERBY.
 No further telegram from Convention. Closed. Local Parliaments must first approve. Then
 address Imperial Legislature. Sydney, December 13.

