

action in the event of war for averting or diminishing disaster, and dividing, as far as possible, any losses that might be entailed through an attack upon all or any of the colonies, I have now the honour to enclose copies of a revised imprint containing certain replies which did not appear in the former paper.

The Hon. the Premier of New Zealand, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

JOHN ROBERTSON.

Enclosure.

The PREMIER, Victoria, to the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New South Wales.

(Telegram.)

Melbourne, 6th May, 1885.

I THOROUGHLY agree with the suggestions made by the Admiral, which you refer to in your telegram of to-day, and which he mentioned to me in conversation. I have no doubt that this colony would join heartily in joint responsibility in such a matter—indeed the whole matter of defence seems to demand federal action; but Lord Derby himself says, in speaking of a system of coastal defence for the Australian Colonies, that federation pre-supposes some federal authority.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, Queensland, to the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New South Wales.

(Telegram.)

Brisbane, 6th May, 1885.

CONFIDENTIAL.—I am disposed to concur in the proposal. I have already arranged, with respect to coal stored at Thursday Island in this colony, for its destruction rather than allow it to fall into an enemy's hands, and we have guards posted there for the purpose. We have also undertaken to indemnify owners, but I agree that the colonies should unite in undertaking the burden.

No. 24.

The GOVERNOR, Tasmania, to the GOVERNOR, New Zealand.

SIR,—

Government House, Hobart, 5th February, 1886.

In compliance with the request of the Federal Council of Australasia, I have the honour to forward to you copies of a resolution passed by the Council on the 4th instant with reference to the indemnification of persons whose property, in case of war, may be sacrificed for the purpose of preventing aid to an enemy's force.

I have, &c.,

Major-General Sir William F. D. Jervois,

GEO. C. STRAHAN.

G.C.M.G., C.B.

Enclosure.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this Council, it is desirable that common action should be taken by the Governments of the Australasian Colonies for the purpose of providing for the indemnification of persons whose property, in case of war, may be sacrificed for the purpose of preventing aid to an enemy's force.

No. 25.

The PREMIER to the PREMIER, New South Wales.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 20th February, 1886.

No. 23.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 19,009, of the 28th ultimo, enclosing copies of an imprint containing replies to your circular letter of the 6th May last, regarding the desirableness of combined action in the event of war, for averting or diminishing disaster, &c., through an attack upon all or any of the colonies.

I have, &c.,

P. A. BUCKLEY,

The Hon. the Premier, Sydney, New South Wales.

(In absence of the Premier).

No. 26.

Governor Sir W. F. D. JERVOIS, G.C.M.G., C.B., to MINISTERS.

(Memorandum.)

HEREWITH is a copy of a memorandum which I have received from Admiral Tryon, stating what passed at the meeting held at Government House, on the 20th January, with reference to the Admiral's letter dated the 24th December, relating to naval defences. It appears to me that the Admiral's memorandum gives a fair account of the proceedings at the meeting in question. I shall be obliged if Ministers then present will state whether they concur. I wish again to call attention to the telegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, expressing a desire that some common course of action should be arrived at between the Imperial and Colonial Governments for the naval defence of Australasia and Australasian waters.

With the view of securing that union and harmony of purpose upon which the permanent maintenance of a reliable national force so greatly depends, the Secretary of State suggests that, if possible, a meeting of the Premiers of the several colonies should be arranged, and that the Governors, or so many of them as can attend, acting on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, should collectively meet and confer with the Premiers of the several colonies for the purpose of considering the matter. Admiral Tryon would be present at the conference as the authorized repre-