

SESS. II.—1887.
NEW ZEALAND.

NAVAL DEFENCE OF THE COLONY, ETC.

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATING THERETO.)

[In Continuation of A.—6B, 1887, Session I.]

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

No. 1.

The PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 4th February, 1887.

I have the honour to inform you that by this mail I have posted sixty copies of a parliamentary paper relating to the naval defence of the colonies, and other matters, which may be of use at the approaching Conference. I have also posted twelve copies of a previous paper which is referred to in it, but which is now out of print, or I would have sent an equal number. The Governor is, however, forwarding twelve other copies with which I have supplied him to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I have, &c.,

Sir F. Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G., C.B., Agent-General.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 2.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

20th March, 1887.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th February and the No. 1. accompanying papers on the subject of naval defence.

Your previous communications had placed clearly before me the policy which New Zealand intended to pursue in relation to naval defence, and it is of course unnecessary for me to assure you, for Sir William Fitzherbert as well as myself, that we shall loyally assist the Government by supporting their policy at the Conference. Indeed, I only say this at all because I have noticed in recent newspapers that opinions about defence have been attributed to me which I have neither expressed nor held, and which I should be the first to disclaim.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 3.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

22nd April, 1887.

I have received to-day your telegram in reply to mine of the 18th on the subject of naval defence, and beg permission to offer my best thanks for so prompt an answer.

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1 and 2.

I ought to have said in my telegram that it was quite understood by Her Majesty's Government, all through, that any assent by the Ministry of a colony to their proposals could only be given subject to the adoption of the proposals by the Colonial Parliaments. Another omission was in my not having explicitly said that the proposals were to be for a term of ten years; but I assumed you would understand it so, as all the negotiations with Admiral Tryon were on that basis.

I take the passage in your telegram about your "not being responsible for withdrawals" to mean that there must be no federal guarantee of the total contribution, but that each colony is only to be responsible for its own quota during the whole term, whether another colony withdraws from the scheme or not. The particular point had not been raised in Conference, doubtless because every one must have understood the proposals as implying your condition; but we shall take care to make the matter clear on Monday.

With regard to Fiji, it is at present very unlikely that she will be told by the Colonial Office to come into the scheme, and we should like to know whether we are to insist upon it.

I am now sending you the telegram of which a copy is annexed.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

[Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, nil; printing (1,375 copies), 17s.]