

in no controversial spirit that I venture to make some remarks on your despatch, but simply because, by means of the light thrown on the affair by the proceedings of the Legislative Council during the last parliamentary session, I think it would be well to consider the conclusion to be drawn from what has occurred.

3. Your Lordship was perfectly justified in assuming that the question had been referred to you by agreement between myself and my Ministers. Strictly speaking I was a party to the reference, but it was only because I did not consider that it would be proper for me to decline to forward a memorandum when asked by my Ministers to do so. Personally, I have always been strongly of opinion that, under the Constitution of New Zealand, the question might have been solved in accordance with the traditions of constitutional government within the colony; but I did not think I had any right to express such an opinion to your Lordship, or to appear to interfere with the undoubted right of my Ministers to appeal to the Secretary of State.

4. It is evident that when I declined to accept the advice of my Ministers they were not willing to resign; but it appears to me that when a difference arises between a Governor and his Advisers the only justification for it is its importance, and this can only be gauged by the result.

5. If, after an exchange of ideas, the Governor incurs the responsibility of adhering to his own views, and the Ministers consider the case sufficiently important, they should resign. If they do not do so, they should give way; but my Ministers did neither, and I submit that in a colony possessing responsible Government, and with the means of putting pressure on the Governor which Ministers in such a colony possess, an appeal to the Colonial Office to interfere between the Governor and themselves is not the course that would be usually expected from a Ministry with a proper conception of the rights and privileges of a self-governing colony.

6. In this case, the question whether I or my Ministers most correctly estimated the effect of the proposed appointments can best be judged, as I think your Lordship will agree, by an examination of the division-lists of the Legislative Council during the past session.

7. From the returns which I have the honour to enclose, it will be seen that, without any addition to the Council, out of thirty-seven Government measures introduced all were carried except two; that, had the nine appointments been made, the Government would have had the majority in every division in the Legislative Council except five; and that, if twelve appointments had been made, the Government would have been victorious in every division except one.

8. The effect of the twelve appointments may therefore be considered to be that the Government has now, by these means, obtained a majority in the Council—a result which I thought it my duty to do what I could to resist.

9. It is therefore apparent to me that had your Lordship, on receiving the memorandum referred to, replied that you thought the question was one which could be settled more satisfactorily on the spot, there would have been an entire collapse of the situation, for the simple reason that the results of the session have proved that the assumption that nine appointments were insufficient to give the Government adequate support rested on an unsubstantial basis, and that I was entirely justified in the position I took up.

10. The information derived from this return was, of course, only available after your Lordship's decision became known.

11. With regard to the different opinions expressed by your Lordship and myself as to which method formed the best basis for calculation as to the strength of the Government in the Legislative Council, I submit that further experience shows that neither would have foreshadowed approximately the result shown by the return; and my opinion is that the Legislative Council, as a body, voted last session according to conviction, tempered by a feeling that in those cases where the country's opinion is known the Council should give way.

12. In conclusion, I beg to remark respectfully that I do not feel that my position has been in any way detrimentally affected by the fact that your decision has been against my view, but I submit that the experience gained by a review of the whole incident may be expressed in the following sentence: that the