

3. I received to-day from the Prime Minister the minute of which a copy is enclosed, from which your Lordship will see that the delegates from the Cape Colony who may be deputed to visit London in connection with the South Africa Act will be authorised to attend the sittings of the Defence Conference; and that the Delegation, which is expected to reach London in the middle of July, will probably consist of the Prime Minister and one or two others.

4. I have informed your Lordship by telegram* of the substance of the minute.

5. I am communicating a copy of this despatch to the High Commissioner.

I have, &c.,

WALTER HELY-HUTCHINSON.

Enclosure in No. 32.

PRIME MINISTER TO GOVERNOR.

(No. 1/187.)

South African National Convention, Bloemfontein, 11th May, 1909.

Ministers have to acknowledge the message, dated 1st May, forwarding the telegraphic message from the Secretary of State with reference to the proposed Conference on the subject of the naval and military defences of the Empire.

Ministers desire to express their appreciation of the courtesy of the Secretary of State in extending to them the invitation to attend this Conference. Owing to the impending political changes in South Africa, His Majesty's Government will readily understand that it will be quite impossible for this Colony to take any part involving responsibilities which would fall on others to discharge. They are, however, entirely at one with the Secretary of State in thinking that the presence of delegates will add to completeness of the Conference and will help the future Union Government in formulating some general scheme of South African Defence and in bringing that scheme into harmony with those which may be adopted in other portions of the Empire. The delegates from the Colony who may be deputed to visit London in connection with the South Africa Act will be authorised to attend the sittings of the Conference on Defence.

It is hoped that the Delegation will reach London in the middle of July.

It will probably consist of the Prime Minister and one or two other delegates.

JOHN X. MERRIMAN.

No. 33.

ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

THE GOVERNOR to THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Received 5 June, 1909.)

MY LORD,—

Governor's Office, Bloemfontein, 17 May, 1909.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 30th ultimo,† I have the honour to inform you that I received through the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope the message from the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom relative to the Imperial Defence Conference.

2. I at once transmitted Mr. Asquith's message to my Prime Minister, and, in confirmation of my telegram to your Lordship of the 13th instant,‡ I now enclose a copy of the minute received by me from Mr. Fischer setting forth the attitude to be adopted by this Colony in reference to the Conference.

I have, &c.,

HAMILTON GOOLD-ADAMS,

Governor.

* No. 21.

† No. 12.

‡ No. 23.