

DESPATCH

FROM THE

SECRETARY OF STATE

IN REFERENCE TO THE

POSITION OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSARY GENERAL
IN NEW ZEALAND.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY BY HIS EXCELLENCY'S COMMAND.



No. 1.

COPY OF A DESPATCH FROM SIR CHICHESTER FORTESCUE, TO GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE GREY.

NEW ZEALAND.

No. 105.

Downing Street, 23rd November, 1861.

SIR,—

I have the honor to transmit to you a copy of a letter from the War office, enclosing one from the Deputy Commissary General in New Zealand, relative to the advances made from the Treasury chest to the Colonial Government for services connected with the present War.

The Deputy Commissary General alludes to a speech in which he is supposed to have been mentioned in a debate as a mere subordinate Commissariat Officer, acting not only without instructions but without the sanction of the Imperial Government.

The Government is neither at liberty to assume that speeches in the Legislative Assembly are correctly reported, nor entitled to take any formal notice of them. I need not however tell an Officer of your experience that the Officer at the head of the Commissariat in New Zealand, being the representative of the Treasury in a Colony where a vast amount of British funds is at this very moment in course of expenditure, is a functionary whose position it would be equally unjust and inconsistent with the fact to represent as one of insignificance. He is fairly entitled to the respect of those for whose benefit the most costly employment of Imperial resources is in progress, and I consider it an object of public importance that the use and authority of the more immediate guardian of the pecuniary interests of Great Britain in the Colony should not be undervalued. I rely therefore upon your exerting your influence, if the necessity should arise, to prevent an improper depreciation of the authority of the Officer at the head of the Commissariat in New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

C. FORTESCUE,
In absence of the Duke of Newcastle.

Governor Sir George Grey, K. C. B.,
&c., &c., &c.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

SIR E. LUGARD, TO MR. ELLIOTT.

War Office, 28th October, 1861.

SIR,—

I am directed by Secretary Sir George Lewis to transmit to you for the information of the Duke of Newcastle the accompanying copy of a letter with its enclosures from the Deputy Commissary General in New Zealand, relative to advances made from the Treasury chest to the Colonial Government of New Zealand for Militia and other services connected with the war, and the disinclination of the Colonial Authorities to consider the claims which he made for repayment of these advances.

Sir George Lewis requests to be informed whether any report has been received at the Colonial Office bearing on this subject.

I have, &c.,

EDWARD LUGARD.

T. F. Elliott, Esq.,
&c., &c., &c.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

MR. DEPUTY COMMISSARY GENERAL JONES TO THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

Commissariat, Auckland,
5th August, 1861.

SIR,—

I do myself the honor to hand you herewith a copy of a communication addressed by me to the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury relative to the advances made from the Treasury Chest to the Colonial Government and the disinclination of the Colonial authorities to consider the claims which I made on account of these advances,

I have, &c.,

H. S. JONES, D.C.G.

The Under Secretary of State for War.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

MR. DEPUTY COMMISSARY GENERAL JONES TO THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE TREASURY,

Commissariat Auckland,
3rd August, 1861.

SIR,—

Referring to my letter No. 158a. of the 28th June last, I consider it is my duty to state for the information of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury that from circumstances which have indirectly come to my knowledge, as well as from the speeches on both sides of the House of Representatives, the Government of this Colony has no present intention of taking steps to repay any portion of the advances made by the Commissariat for Militia and other purposes connected with the present war.

The intention of the Colonial Government is evidently to delay as long as possible, certainly until the end of the war, and after declining altogether to refund advances for some services already guaranteed, they propose claiming a guarantee on the part of the Home Government for a loan at 4 per cent. interest with a sinking fund to provide for its ultimate lapse.

"Southern Cross," 20th
July, 1861.

I beg to hand you a copy of a local paper containing a report of the proceedings in the House of Representatives on the occasion of the Government bringing forward the budget for the year, from which with other information I have arrived at the conclusion above stated.

As the Colonial Government is continuing to draw money from the Treasury Chest to the extent of nearly £4000 monthly (including the cost of rations) I have taken the earliest opportunity of thus bringing the above under their Lordships consideration.

I would further draw attention to the speech of the late Colonial Secretary referring to me personally as a mere subordinate Commissariat Officer, acting not only without instructions, but without the sanction of the Imperial Government, and designating my sending in statements of these claims as "very great piece of impertinence," these remarks having elicited no rejoinder from the House, they may I presume be taken as the general opinion of the Country and Government.

I do not bring this subject forward from any personal feeling, but solely on public grounds, and if in the present excited state of the country my services as head of the Commissariat Department, and representative of the Imperial Treasury, are to be of any weight in the Colony, I must beg to have my true position made known through the Governor to the Colonial Government as it is evident otherwise I am all but powerless.

Had the titular Military rank been enjoyed by Officers of the department, I am convinced such expressions would never have been uttered, and probably the Colonial Government would have evinced greater disposition to provide some means to meet the claims I submitted to them.

I have, &c.,

H. S. JONES,
Deputy Commissary General,