

No. 9.

AUSTRALIA.

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL to THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Received 4.40 p.m., 15 April, 1909.)

[Answered by No. 10.]

TELEGRAM.

Prime Minister of the Commonwealth has asked me to submit to your Lordship, for consideration of His Majesty's Government, the following memorandum on the question of Naval Defence :—

“Whereas all the Dominions of the British Empire ought to share in the most effective way in the burden of maintaining the permanent naval supremacy of the Empire :

“And whereas this Government is of opinion that, so far as Australia is concerned, this object would be best attained by encouragement of naval development in this country so that people of Commonwealth will become a people efficient at sea and thereby better able to assist United Kingdom with men as well as ships to act in concert with the other sea forces of the Empire :

“The views of the present Government, as a basis of co-operation and mutual understanding, are herewith submitted :—

- “ (1) The Naval Agreement Act to continue for the term provided for;
- “ (2) The Commonwealth Government to continue to provide, equip, and maintain the defences of naval base for the use of the ships of the Royal Navy;
- “ (3) In order to place Australia in a position to undertake the responsibility of local naval defence, the Commonwealth Government to establish a Naval Force;
- “ (4) The Commonwealth Government to provide ships constituting the torpeda flotilla and maintain them in a state of efficiency, wages, pay, provision, and maintenance of officers and men;
- “ (5) The sphere of action of the Naval Force of the Commonwealth to be primarily about the coast of Commonwealth and its territories;
- “ (6) The administrative control of the Naval Force of the Commonwealth to rest with the Commonwealth Government. The officer commanding to take his orders from the Commonwealth Government direct, proper sequence of command by officers appointed by the Commonwealth being maintained. The forces to be under naval discipline administered in same way as in the Royal Navy;
- “ (7) Whilst employed about the coast of Commonwealth or its territories, whether within territorial limits or not, the vessels forming the Naval Force of the Commonwealth to be under the sole control of Commonwealth. Should the vessels go to other places, the said vessels to come under the command of the naval officer representing the British Government, if such officer be senior in rank to the Commonwealth officer. Provided that, if it be necessary to send these vessels or any of them on training cruises outside the waters referred to, arrangements shall be made with the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty through Naval Commander-in-Chief on the Australian Station;
- “ (8) In time of war or emergency or upon a declaration by the Senior Naval Officer representing British Government that a condition of emergency exists, all the vessels of the Naval Force of the Commonwealth shall be placed by the Com-