

colleagues upon their assuming office, by which act they have now become part of their responsibility, notwithstanding that Mr. Earle differed from His Excellency before accepting office in his view of their necessity.

The Governor would remind Mr. Earle that it is his (the Governor's) duty to consider the question of a dissolution of Parliament solely with reference to the general interests of the people, and not from a party standpoint; and he is further entitled to stipulate upon whatever conditions he may deem essential for the promotion of the public interests before he proceeds to exercise the powers entrusted to him.

For reasons which he need not now enter upon, the Governor did not consider the late Ministry entitled to a dissolution, but, having come to the conclusion that a dissolution was necessary, he believed that the best chance of securing a stable Administration was to entrust Mr. Earle with the duty of forming one, subject to the conditions which Mr. Earle accepted.

The Governor had previously considered the instances to which Mr. Earle refers, and has again considered them. One is not relevant to the issue, and the others in no way conflict with the opinion arrived at by His Excellency.

The Governor is also unable to accept the views held by Mr. Earle on—(1) the present relations of political parties to each other in this State, or on (2) the existing situation.

The Governor must point out that he placed no pressure upon Mr. Earle to accept office under the conditions referred to. They were deliberately accepted by Mr. Earle after the Governor had informed him that they could not be altered, and as deliberately accepted by the other members of the Administration whose names were submitted to His Excellency on the following day.

The Governor therefore cannot admit that he is forcing any policy on Mr. Earle, or that the question of dissolution is one upon which Mr. Earle is now in position to offer His Excellency advice which he is bound to accept.

It is important to bear in mind that the discretion of a Governor with regard to the question of dissolution is, as in other instances of the exercise of the prerogative, much wider in the colonies than that upon which by constitutional practice the Sovereign acts in the United Kingdom. It is impossible, as one of the most recent authorities on Government in the dominions has pointed out, to maintain the position that the Governor is a parallel to the Sovereign in Constitutional Monarchy, and that therefore he is obliged to act on the advice of his Ministers in the same sense as that in which the King of the United Kingdom acts on the advice of his Ministers.

8th April, 1914.

WILLIAM ELLISON-MACARTNEY, Governor.

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No. 4.

ADDRESS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

To His Excellency Sir William Grey Ellison-Macartney, Privy Councillor, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor in and over the State of Tasmania and its Dependencies, in the Commonwealth of Australia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We, His Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the members of the House of Assembly of Tasmania in Parliament assembled, desire to very respectfully express our opinion that the action of Your Excellency in imposing on Ministers as a condition of their appointment an undertaking to agree to a dissolution of Parliament, whether this House approves the policy of Ministers or not, is contrary to the well-established usage of Responsible Government, and, this House respectfully suggests, is undesirable; and we pray that Your Excellency will be pleased to forward the above-mentioned resolution of this House, together with copies of all communications between Your Excellency and the Honourable the Premier relating to such condition, to His Majesty the King, through the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

W. A. Woods, Speaker.

Passed by the House of Assembly, this 8th day of April, 1914.

J. K. Reid,  
Clerk of the House.

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No. 5.

The SECRETARY OF STATE to the GOVERNOR.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 5th June, 1914.

I have the honour to request you to inform your Ministers that I have duly received the text of the address passed by the House of Assembly on the 8th April [No. 4], in which the House expressed their opinion that "your action in imposing on Ministers as a condition of their appointment an undertaking to agree to the dissolution of Parliament, whether this House approves the policy of Ministers or not is contrary to the well-established usage of Responsible Government, and, this House respectfully suggests, is undesirable." I have, as requested, laid it before the King, and His Majesty was pleased to receive it very graciously.

2. I have given my most careful consideration to the course of events which led up to the presentation of this address. I recognize that a difficult position has existed for some time in Tasmania, owing to the practical equality of parties in the House of Assembly, but I am of