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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

NATIVE DISTURBANCES IN NEW PLYMOUTH

DESPATCH FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

IN REPLY TO A MEMORIAL FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT AND PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF NEW PLYMOUTH
RELATIVE TO NATIVE DISTURBANCES IN THAT PROVINCE.

Transmitted to the House 14th May, 1856, and ordered to be Printed.

THOMAS GORE BROWNE,
Governor.

Message No. 18.

In accordance with the wish expressed in Resolution No. 16, dated the 9th May, 1856, the Governor transmits for the information of the House of Representatives, copy of the reply from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to the Memorial to Her Majesty from the Superintendent and Provincial Council of New Plymouth, on the Native disturbances in that Province.

Government House,
Auckland, 14th May, 1856.

Downing-street, 28th Nov., 1855.

Sir,—I have to acknowledge the Despatch of Acting Governor Wynyard, No. 43, of the 19th April last, transmitting a Petition addressed to Her Majesty by the Provincial Council of New Plymouth, for military support, under their apprehension of disturbances among the neighbouring Chiefs.

2. The Petition has been presented to Her Majesty, who has been pleased to receive the same very graciously, but as the Acting Governor reported by the same mail, his having determined to afford military assistance to the Province to the extent of the means at his disposal, it has not been thought necessary to advise Her Majesty to take any steps thereon.

3. I cannot however, let this opportunity pass, of communicating to the memorialists through yourself, the general views of Her Majesty's Government on the subject of this requisition. So long as the white population of New Zealand were small in numbers, while the Maori were numerous and unaccustomed to the vicinity of civilization, and while, moreover, the Government and Legislation of the Colony were under the control of the Crown, it was deemed right to maintain a considerable military force in New Zealand in order that the new community might take root under that protection. But the numbers of the white inhabitants are now greatly increased, the natives have become comparatively educated and tractable, and the management of the entire revenue of the Islands, with full powers of legislation in domestic affairs, have passed into the hands of the people themselves through their representatives. Her Majesty's Government can no longer consider themselves bound to follow the policy of their predecessors, in permanently furnishing the white inhabitants with military defence against possible danger from the natives. Such danger must be provided against by the Provincial communities themselves, by the organization of a militia, or of a Police Force, and I am persuaded, that if sufficient means are used to secure that object, provided that at the same time justice and moderation are observed in

intercourse with the natives there can be no serious danger of the latter either attacking the settlements, or involving the white inhabitants in their quarrels. Colonel Wynyard's conduct in establishing a detachment at Taranaki, has been approved in the present instance, but it must not be supposed that Her Majesty's Government is to be looked to, for similar assistance on future occasions.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. LABOUCHERE.

Governor Gore Browne,
&c., &c., &c.