

29. You will, I am sure, permit me to say, with every respect to your Lordship, that those who have thus described the Colony to your Lordship, have not accurately described the state of things existing here. The Officer Commanding the Troops is not in Wellington but at Auckland, distant from the Seat of Government fifteen days in point of time. He is not a mere passer by; he commands the Local Forces as well as the Regular Forces.

30. The troops in the Colony occupy many positions in it. The tranquillity and safety of the two populations depends upon the detachments of troops in their vicinity, and upon the order in which, and the time at which, they may be withdrawn, as does also the future of tribes of Natives who have joined us and whom we cannot abandon without disgrace. From time immemorial, within the limits of the Colonial Empire, no such troops can be moved but by the orders of the Queen's Representative; and he alone can possess the information regarding the state of the country which can enable such orders to be given with safety. For about fourteen years, in all, the two races inhabiting this Colony have looked to me to give such orders, and to take care, in giving them, that due provision was made for their safety and welfare, and for the fulfilment of the written or implied engagements under which Native Tribes had aided the Queen's Forces against their countrymen.

31. I am sure that your Lordship will feel that to depose me from the execution of this trust, to devolve it on my junior officer, and to order me to aid and assist him in the performance of these duties, whether I think he is performing them wisely or unwisely, or even in breach of positive engagements, is not rightly described by saying he is in the position of an officer who happens to have called with a detachment at Wellington. The disgrace on myself is public and manifest; that I accept as a misfortune I cannot avoid; but what I fear is, that another officer, from lack of information and from other causes, may not, even with the best wishes, be able to perform without disaster duties on which depend the interests of those for whom I have cared so long. I think it a hazardous experiment to try.

32. In compliance with your Lordship's wishes to obtain the earliest information on this subject, I beg to state that it is my impression that the Colony will not agree to any stipulation for the purpose of retaining here one regiment, subject to the conditions laid down in your Lordship's Despatch.

33. I do not doubt from the present state of feeling in this country, that the General Assembly will continue to provide large funds for the Native race; but I think the Local Government will argue that if a regiment is retained here, it is quite uncertain where the officer in command may choose to reside, as he will not obey the orders of the Governor on this subject; and that, as he will have the command of the Local Forces, as well as of the Regular Forces, whilst the Governor may be indirectly deprived of the control he should constitutionally have over the Regular Forces, the Local Government may to a certain extent lose its control over the forces it raises and pays, and thus not have the means of providing for the safety of portions of the Colony on any sudden emergency. That the fact of a regiment of the Regular Troops being always kept concentrated and idle in places easy of access, where adequate barrack accommodation exists (which must here be a town), and this in a country where local disturbances must be expected occasionally to arise, and where all should be constantly ready to take the field and outpost and frontier duties, would be a bad example to, and have a prejudicial effect on, the Local Forces, and would be quite contrary to the old custom, in which the troops, by constructing roads and bridges, and taking their share of frontier duties, encouraged and gave an example to the Local Forces; whilst they formed themselves into an infantry unsurpassed in the world, and left great works behind them, lasting memorials of the industry, skill, and daring of the British soldier.

34. It might also be justly feared that if such an arrangement became known to the disaffected Natives, they would view it almost with disdain, or at least with feelings which would work prejudicially for the future peace of the country; so that it might well be doubted if the presence of a regiment, under such conditions, might not do more harm than good.