

I should mention, also, that even though matters quiet down on the West Coast, there exist good grounds for supposing that from other causes the peace of the Colony may be disturbed. I allude to the report current on high authority that it is contemplated to occupy Taupo, in the centre of the Island, with an Imperial force. At best, this would be a hazardous measure. If it be interpreted by the Natives, as is not improbable, into a determination on our part to take forcible possession of their country at any price, the natural consequence would be that the last spark of Native confidence in the white man would be extinguished, and they would band together in a strong spirit of exasperation against us. War, and increased expenditure, would follow. But even if the establishment of Imperial Troops at Taupo be quietly effected, the cost of supporting them there will be excessive as compared with what it would be at settlements on the sea coast, or at any of the places indicated by the Secretary of State for War, as those places which are to be garrisoned by Imperial Troops.

Thus, in any case, the measure in question can hardly fail of materially affecting Imperial expenditure. For these reasons I bring it to your notice, and would remark that I have done so on no vague or irresponsible report.

I have, &c.,

E. STRICKLAND,

D.C.G.

The Secretary to Her Majesty's Treasury, Whitehall.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure in No. 22.

Deputy Commissary-General STRICKLAND to the Assistant MILITARY SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Commissariat, New Zealand, Auckland, 8th November, 1866.

I have the honor to request that you will be good enough very respectfully on my part, to direct the attention of the Major-General Commanding to the recent field operations on the West Coast, in which the Imperial Troops have been actively employed in an unsettled district, neither for the protection of settlers or their property.

Mr. Cardwell, in his Despatch No. 97, dated 27th November, 1865, to His Excellency Sir G. Grey, says—"I have already told you that Her Majesty's Government would not approve of the protection by the Imperial Troops of land taken from the rebels."

In the same Despatch it is directed that troops remaining in the Colony are to be concentrated, that they are not to be left in distant and isolated posts.

Again, under date of 26th November, in his Despatch No. 113, Mr. Cardwell says—"Her Majesty's Government cannot permit these troops to be dispersed in distant and isolated posts, nor allow the cost of inland transport to be a charge upon Imperial Funds."

All these orders notwithstanding, confiscated lands are still being protected in various parts of the Colony by Imperial Troops. The troops are not concentrated as directed, and the cost of inland transport is made to bear heavily upon the Imperial Treasury. Even more, it is announced in the local press that His Excellency the Governor has recently organized an expedition upon the West Coast, for purposes of aggression, and has employed upon it a considerable amount of Imperial Troops, including a reinforcement of the permanent Land Transport still maintained in the country.

I cannot but attach much importance to the re-employment of an Imperial element in this Colonial war, not alone because an Imperial expenditure is thus re-commenced, the termination of which it is impossible to foresee, but also because such a course is contrary to the avowed policy of the Colonial Government, dating from 1864.

This policy has been accepted and insisted on by Mr. Cardwell, who has directed that no Imperial Force is to remain in the Colony, except at the request of Ministers, and upon their undertaking to propose to the Assembly the required capitation charge.

Again Mr. Cardwell has informed His Excellency the Governor, that it is the fixed purpose of Her Majesty's Government that no Imperial Troops shall remain in New Zealand, for whom the necessary appropriation has not been made.

Since the receipt of this Despatch in the Colony, the Assembly has met and has been prorogued, and no appropriation has been made by it for the Imperial Troops now in the Colony, not even, as far as I can learn, for the one Battalion of Infantry which was to have been retained under special conditions, and which I am informed by you is to form the Imperial Military Force in this Colony.

I would earnestly urge the expediency of some steps being taken by which the reiterated orders of the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies may be carried out, and a stop be put to the large expenditure of Imperial treasure, which is still insisted upon in this Colony, not alone in the issue of rations to Colonial Troops, which was called for by His Excellency, in May last, under "a pressing and extraordinary emergency, affecting the safety of the Colony," but now by the active employment of Imperial Troops for Colonial purposes, and by increasing the demand on this department for the issue of rations to Colonial Troops in very inaccessible positions over a large extent of wild country.

The cost of rations is, by transport and otherwise, thus much increased, and the Imperial Government is compelled to maintain, throughout the Waikato, along the West Coast, in the Napier country, and at Tauranga, an expensive administrative machinery and considerable depôts of stores, which might long ago have been dispensed with had the orders received from home been complied with here.

I would propose that after the 31st December, 1866, the issue of rations from this department to the Colony shall cease, and that a representation be forwarded home thereof,

1st. How Imperial Troops have been employed in this Colony during the financial year.

2nd. That a sufficient number of Colonial Troops, during all that time, has not been raised to take the place of the Imperial Troops, admitting that it is necessary still to retain military possession of confiscated land.

3rd. That no appropriation has been made by the Colony for the Imperial Troops retained in the Colony for, and employed in, Colonial interests.

4th. That it is impossible to foresee a termination of this state of things which has been so long and anxiously expected.