

MEMORANDA BETWEEN HIS EXCELLENCY

tional usage, it is the recognized duty of Parliament, in case of a pending dissolution, to grant the requisite supplies for the public service, limited to the shortest period which will enable a new Parliament to meet.

Ministers have no reason to doubt, and in fact do not doubt, that the New Zealand Parliament will perform its proper constitutional duty.

Wellington, 5th October, 1872.

E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 4.

His Excellency Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G., to the Hon. Mr. STAFFORD.

THE Governor has received Mr. Stafford's second Memorandum of the 5th instant.

He has now given his full and earnest attention to all the aspects of the question submitted to him in so clear and able a manner.

Among the considerations which have led the Governor to the decision at which he has arrived, may be mentioned the following:—

- (1.) It has always been held by English statesmen and political writers of authority that frequent dissolutions are injurious to Parliamentary government, for, in addition to other disadvantages, they have an obvious tendency to cause Members to be regarded as mere delegates of the constituencies, and not as representatives of the country at large. Now, the existing Parliament of New Zealand was elected for five years in 1871. It is as yet only in its second Session, and is barely eighteen months old. To put the Colony to the great expense and inconvenience of a general election twice within so short a period could be justified only by the gravest necessity.
- (2.) It appears probable that the country is as much divided as the Legislature which represents it. At all events, there has been no strong or universal expression of public opinion in favour of either of the parties which have lately held office. Indeed it seems evident that the country generally is disposed to regard the differences between most of its leading men as personal rather than political, and as concerned with matters of detail rather than of principle.
- (3.) There is absolutely no question of magnitude to refer to the constituencies. Both sides in the present Parliament support the policy of Public Works and Immigration which was adopted by the last Parliament. Both sides approve a policy of peace and conciliation towards the Maoris. No measure of urgent importance, respecting which any material difference of opinion exists, appears to be pending.
- (4.) If the nearly equally balanced state of parties in the Legislature (as shown by recent occurrences) be taken into account, it appears that Mr. Stafford may probably be somewhat too sanguine in deeming it beyond doubt that either of those parties, as at present constituted, would find no difficulty in getting supplies, or in securing the passing of an Appropriation Act with a view to an immediate dissolution.
- (5.) It seems to be morally certain that the majority of the Parliament and of the people of New Zealand agree in desiring that there may be formed, on a wider basis, a new Administration strong enough to carry on the Government without further interruption of the public business. It is confidently expected that practical effect can be given to that desire.

On the whole, the Governor believes that a fresh appeal to the country would be premature until all proper endeavours in the direction indicated in the last paragraph shall have failed. Consequently, he has decided that his duty compels him to decline to accede to Mr. Stafford's recommendation of an immediate dissolution.

G. F. BOWEN.

Government House, 7th October, 1872.

P.S.—With reference more particularly to the paragraph marked 4, the Governor wishes to add, that he does not intend any part of this Memorandum to be understood to imply that he would make any objection, if Ministers still differ from the views expressed in that paragraph, and desire to test the opinion of Parliament upon the point at issue. In that case the Governor expects—

(a.) That this correspondence shall be laid before both Houses, with the object of preventing any possible misapprehension; and,

(b.) That the passing of the necessary Appropriation Act shall be regarded as evidence that the Legislature agrees with Ministers in deeming expedient an early appeal to the Constituencies.

G. F. BOWEN.

No. 5.

The Hon. Mr. STAFFORD to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MR. STAFFORD respectfully acknowledges the Governor's Memorandum of to-day. The resignation of Ministers would have been immediately placed in His Excellency's hands had it not been for the postscript.

Ministers have always, as expressed in Mr. Stafford's second Memorandum, recognized the necessity of obtaining the sanction of Parliament for the requisite public expenditure before Parliament is actually dissolved.

They have no reason to doubt that Parliament will perform its constitutional duty, to enable the public service to be carried on until the reassembling of the Legislature.

Before, however, submitting to Parliament proposals founded on a contemplated dissolution, Mr. Stafford submits that he should be enabled to announce that, on the supplies being granted, Parliament will be dissolved.