

(No. 26.)



1861.

T A S M A N I A.

DEFENCES OF THE COLONY.

DESPATCHES.

Laid upon the Table by Mr Henty, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
17 September, 1861.



TASMANIA. (No. 121.)
[MILITARY.]

Government House, Hobart Town, 22 October, 1860.

MY LORD DUKE,

I HAVE the honor to transmit a Report of the Joint Committee of the two Houses of the Legislature of the Colony.

2. The local force of Volunteers being at present limited to Fifteen hundred, I request that the One thousand stands of Enfield Rifles and Accoutrements already supplied may be increased, by the shipment of 500 more Rifles, &c., at the earliest opportunity. The extent of success which has as yet attended the Volunteer Movement, renders necessary this application for the additional number of Rifles.

3. With respect to the recommendation that two fast Gun Boats of light draught, and with 3 or 4 guns would afford the best means of defending the City of Hobart Town and its anchorage from Foreign aggression; I desire to state, that so soon as the intention to supply one or both of such vessels is signified, a Marine Force would be locally organised to man them.

4. I trust that Your Grace, in conformity with the recommendation of the Progress Report of the 18th September, 1860, from the Select Committee of both Houses, will be pleased to move the Secretary of State for War to direct, that such Military and other Buildings as may be required, in the opinion of the Governor and Executive Council, by the Local Government for Colonial purposes, may be transferred to the Colony, on condition that the same be kept in repair. The principle of this transfer has been already sanctioned in the case of the Sydney Government. I beg to submit that the Launceston Commissariat Store, and the Ordnance Buildings on the Hobart Town Wharf, are those which are at this time the most urgently needed for the public uses of the Colonial Government.

5. The previous application contained in my Despatch No. 90, of 29th September, 1859, for two Companies of the Royal Artillery, at joint expense of the British and Local Treasuries, whenever granted, is not meant to diminish or affect the claim of Tasmania to such Troops of the Line at the exclusive cost of Great Britain, as the presence of British Convicts has rendered necessary.

6. The Legislature awaits with anxiety the decision of the Imperial Government on the whole question of Colonial Defences, and when this shall be received, the actual requirements and quota of aid from the Colony will be the subject of further correspondence.

I have, &c.,

H. E. F. YOUNG.

His Grace the DUKE OF NEWCASTLE, K.G.

Downing-street, 26th April, 1861.

TASMANIA. (No. 33.)

SIR,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch of the 22nd October last, No. 121, transmitting a Report of the Joint Committee of the two Houses of the Legislature, on the Defences of Tasmania.

As regards a further supply of Rifles for the use of the Volunteer Force established in the Colony, I have to acquaint you, that 500 Rifles (the number which you specify) of the pattern of 1853, will be forwarded to you from India, where there is a large supply in store.

I transmit to you a copy of a letter addressed by my desire, to the War Department, which will explain to you, why these Rifles were sent from India.

I regret, however, to have to inform you, that Her Majesty's Government are unable to meet the wishes of the Legislative Council and Assembly, to be supplied with two fast Gun Boats of light draught, with 3 or 4 Guns.

Her Majesty's Government have fully considered how the Maritime Force of Her Majesty could be best distributed, with a view to the security of the widely scattered portions of the Empire, and the general principles of such defence must consist rather in concentration on certain stations, than dispersion in every assailable Port.

The total number of Gun Boats belonging to Her Majesty's Navy would not admit of their being distributed in small numbers, even to all the principal Ports of the United Kingdom, and in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the defence of the Colonies would not be best secured by the dispersion of Ships of War in all parts of the Globe, without any reference to the probable movement of an enemy, or to the stations at which his forces would be most likely to be concentrated.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,
NEWCASTLE.

Governor SIR HENRY YOUNG, &c.

Downing-street, 26th April.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Duke of Newcastle to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo, requesting to be informed whether the 500 Rifles required for the Volunteer Force in Tasmania, should be supplied from the Enfield Rifles in Store in India.

Assuming that these Rifles are the same pattern as the 1000 already sent to that Colony, and that they are the best of their pattern, and not damaged by use or neglect in India; and taking into consideration the delay that would arise in forwarding Rifles of the latest pattern, and that it would also probably be preferable that the Volunteers should be supplied with Arms of one uniform pattern, although the second best, rather than of two patterns, even though one of them may be of the best and latest make; the Duke of Newcastle has come to the conclusion, that the required number of Rifles may be sent from India, as proposed.

I am therefore to request, that you will move Lord Herbert to give such instructions as may be necessary, to ensure an early transmission of them to Tasmania.

As the Duke of Newcastle does not understand that these Rifles are to be supplied free of cost to the Colony, I am to request that he may be informed of the amount which will be required in payment of them.

I am, &c.

The Under Secretary of State for War.