http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz

ResearchSpace@Auckland

Copyright Statement

The digital copy of this thesis is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

This thesis may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- Any use you make of these documents or images must be for research or private study purposes only, and you may not make them available to any other person.
- Authors control the copyright of their thesis. You will recognise the author's right to be identified as the author of this thesis, and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate.
- You will obtain the author's permission before publishing any material from their thesis.

To request permissions please use the Feedback form on our webpage.
http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/feedback

General copyright and disclaimer

In addition to the above conditions, authors give their consent for the digital copy of their work to be used subject to the conditions specified on the Library Thesis Consent Form.
FREDERICK WELD: A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in History

by

Jeanine Williams

University of Auckland

February 1973
PREFACE

Frederick Weld arrived in New Zealand early in 1844, an unassuming and shy twenty-year old with high hopes and modest assets. He left the colony two decades later, a well-established and prominent citizen whose reputation was regarded by imperial authorities as ample qualification for appointment to a colonial governorship. Following a successful term of office in Western Australia, he was promoted to Tasmania and thence to the Straits Settlements, from which post he retired in 1887. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how Weld's colonial experience greatly influenced the nature of his administrations as a governor and to illustrate how his outlook gradually changed from one of a colonist to that of a servant of empire.

The principal sources of information for this thesis have been manuscript collections, newspapers, parliamentary debates and official despatches, and I am most grateful to the staffs of the following institutions for their advice and help in locating material. In New Zealand, the Alexander Turnbull Library, Auckland Public Library, Auckland University Library, Canterbury Museum, Canterbury Public Library, Dunedin Public Library, General Assembly Library, Hocken Library, National Archives, Victoria University Library; in Australia, the Archives of the Catholic Archdiocese, Perth, Battye Library of Western Australian History, La Trobe Library, Menzies Library, Mitchell Library, National Library, New Norcia Mission Archives, University of Sydney Library, University of Western Australia Library; in Malaysia, the National Archives and University of Malaya Library; in Singapore, the National Library and University of Singapore Library; and in
England, the British Museum (Bloomsbury and Colindale), Dorchester Records Office, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Institute of Historical Research, and Public Record Office. I am indebted to Mr and Mrs S. Scrope of Flaxbourne House, Great Ouseburn, York; Lt-Colonel and Mrs H. J. Weld of Chideock Manor, Bridport, Dorset; Mr and Mrs H. H. Vavasour of Ugbrooke near Blenheim; and Mr and Mrs J. B. Douglas-Clifford of Stonyhurst near Cheviot, for their generous hospitality and assistance. My thanks are also due to the University Grants Committee for a three-year postgraduate scholarship of mixed tenure; the Auckland Savings Bank and the British Council for travel grants which enabled me to work in Malaysia, Singapore, England and Western Australia, 1968-9; and my parents for their ready offers of financial aid towards my various research trips in New Zealand and to eastern Australia in October 1971.

To my supervisors, Professors Keith Sinclair and Nicholas Tarling, I should like to express my sincere gratitude for their constant guidance, patience and tolerance during the five years it has taken me to complete this study. I am also deeply grateful to my long-suffering family and friends for their unfailing understanding and encouragement. To my mother and father to whom this thesis is dedicated, to the late Phillip Yiannett, and to Geoffrey and Margaret Lamb, my personal debt is immeasurable.

Finally I should like to thank Mr Don Branch for drawing the maps; Miss Elizabeth Andrews, Dr Margaret South and Mr Alan Burton for saving me from committing a number of solecisms; Dr Annelies Rohrer for proof-reading the entire manuscript; and Mrs Mary Ogle for calmly persevering with the formidable task of typing it.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Preface | ii |
| List of plates and maps | v |
| Abbreviations | vi |

**PART ONE  ENGLAND AND NEW ZEALAND  1823-69**

| I | Background of a pioneer: 1823-43 | 1 |
| II | First year in the Wairarapa: 1844-5 | 9 |
| III | Pioneering: 1845-8 | 27 |
| IV | Pastoralism and politics: 1849-51 | 54 |
| V | Into parliament: 1852-4 | 75 |
| VI | Confusion: 1854 | 105 |
| VII | Itinerant politician: 1855-64 | 127 |
| VIII | Premier: 1864-5 | 164 |
| IX | Disillusionment: 1865 | 202 |
| X | Defeat: 1865 | 236 |
| XI | Interlude: 1866-9 | 291 |

**PART TWO  WESTERN AUSTRALIA  1869-74**

| XII | First Impressions: 1869 | 306 |
| XIII | Rose-water revolutions: 1870-2 | 326 |
| XIV | Controversy: 1872 | 354 |
| XV | Aftermath: 1873 | 379 |
| XVI | The launching delayed: 1874 | 398 |

**PART THREE  TASMANIA  1875-80**

| XVII | No 'roi fainéant': 1875-80 | 422 |

**PART FOUR  STRAITS SETTLEMENTS AND ENGLAND  1880-91**

| XVIII | On Tour: 1880 | 476 |
| XIX | 'Mr Great Governor': 1881-3 | 503 |
| XX | Guardian of empire: 1884-5 | 544 |
| XXI | Towards the promised land: 1886-7 | 585 |
| XXII | Retirement: 1887-91 | 623 |
| Conclusion | 627 |
| Appendices | 634 |
| Bibliography | 638 |
LIST OF PLATES AND MAPS

PLATES
1. Wharekaka following p.26
2. Picton and Lake Rotomahana " p.126
3. Mt Egmont " p.163
4. Frederick Weld " p.290
5. Frederick and Mena Weld " p.290
6. Group photograph c. 1866 " p.290
7. Group photograph, 1882 " p.543

MAPS
1. New Zealand following p.53
2. Western Australia and Tasmania " p.325
3. Malay States and the Negri Sembilan p.502
### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

#### Official

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AJHR</td>
<td>Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD</td>
<td>Parliamentary Debates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Cornwall Chronicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBH</td>
<td>Hawke's Bay Herald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>Launceston Examiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT</td>
<td>Lyttleton Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Hobart Town Daily Mercury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZS</td>
<td>New Zealand Spectator and Cook Straits Guardian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODT</td>
<td>Otago Daily Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Penang Gazette and Straits Chronicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH</td>
<td>Penang Herald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Penang Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDT</td>
<td>Singapore Daily Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFP</td>
<td>Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>Straits Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Straits Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH</td>
<td>Taranaki Herald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TT</td>
<td>Tasmanian Tribune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI</td>
<td>Wellington Independent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Location:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Auckland Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT</td>
<td>Alexander Turnbull Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMu</td>
<td>Canterbury Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRO</td>
<td>Dorchester Records Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du Ho</td>
<td>Hocken Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>General Assembly Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>National Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL</td>
<td>National Library, Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>Public Record Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Archives of Tasmania</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART ONE

ENGLAND AND NEW ZEALAND: 1823-69
CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF A PIONEER: 1823–43

Frederick Aloysius, third son of Humphrey and Maria Weld of Chideock near Bridport, Dorsetshire, was born in England on 9 May 1823. His ancestry was distinguished. Both the Welds and the Cliffords, his maternal forbears, were, as their descendants remain, prominent West Country Catholic families, and such was the influence of heredity and environment that this young man was to grow up fully aware that he had been born an Englishman, a Catholic and a gentleman.

His parents Frederick regarded as models of every virtue. Both led lives full of good works and service to others. Outlays on a neglected estate and the expenses of a large family kept Humphrey Weld comparatively poor and restricted the Welds to a quiet life in the country, though with nine children to inhabit the unpretentious manor still in use today, life cannot have been too uneventful. The Chideock Welds were a closely-knit family. Eleanor, Charles and William were all several years older than Frederick; Apollonia and Christina about his own age; Edmund, Amy and Lucy some years younger. Frederick was the family favourite. Charles for instance, conceding that brothers in general were 'not the most enthusiastic appraisers of each others merits', once wrote that there was not one of his brothers and sisters who did not gladly admit Frederick’s superiority nor regard him with unqualified love and respect.

The Welds’ social circle was not large and most of Frederick’s early recollections centred on Chideock; on Ugbrooke, the Clifford ancestral home near Chudleigh, Devonshire; and on the traditional Weld seat of Lulworth Castle near Weymouth, now an impressive ruin. Despite somewhat delicate health, Frederick led a normal childhood. The family visited France when he was five and his military ardour ran high as he watched the day long reviews, drills and parades in the Place des Armes at Versailles. While in France he fell seriously ill with typhoid fever but he recovered and at Chideock and Lulworth was able to indulge his boyhood passions of fishing and sailing. He was at Ugbrooke when Catholic emancipation became law in 1829 and never forgot the celebrations when his grandfather Clifford returned from taking up his rightful seat in the House of Lords. Frederick Weld’s lifelong concern with political privilege might well be said to date from this time.

In 1833 Frederick was sent to Hodder, the preparatory school for Stonyhurst, the Jesuit college in Lancashire endowed by Thomas Weld. The following year he moved up to Stonyhurst. By his own account he worked hard only at his special interests of history, geography and languages. He considered himself well up in English literature for his age and with all the earnestness in the world delighted in discussing favourite passages with his friends. Frederick generally won the class prize for poetry but, judging by the few later efforts which have survived, his poetic potential, if indeed he had any, was certainly never realised. His artistic talents were always best expressed with a paintbrush.

At the age of eighteen he left England for the University of Fribourg
in Switzerland. There he attended a variety of courses in philosophy, chemistry, law and philosophy of history, all of interest but none of much practical use to him. Frederick disliked Fribourg at first. The exceedingly strict continental method of supervision irritated him intensely though, as he later admitted, insular pride and pugnacity led many of the English students to assume airs of superiority and to resent affronts that were not always intended. The most important legacy of Fribourg was the personal friendship developed with one of the Jesuit priests, Father Freudenfeldt, sometime royal tutor in Prussia, university lecturer, military ADC and controversial professor at Bonn University. Freudenfeldt made a lasting impression on his student and in the late 1880s Frederick Weld still regarded the priest as the wisest man he had ever known.

The Fribourg sojourn ended in Easter 1843 giving way to travels to Basle and Strasbourg, down the Rhine by Liege to Brussels, thence to Ghent, Bruges, Mechelin and of course Waterloo. After an absence of two and a half years Frederick was glad to return home but though he settled for a time to the leisurely life of visits, hunting and sailing, he was increasingly troubled by the uncertainty of his future.

For given the limited state of family finances, there were very few professions open to a young Catholic full of idealism and ambition to do something worthwhile with his life. His natural tendency was towards a military career but Freudenfeldt tried to dissuade him from this, arguing that with no prospect of war the life was an idle one. It was also expensive. Frederick considered law but decided, wisely, that he lacked the special qualities necessary for success. A well-intentioned adviser suggested he take up engineering and try the United
States. The idea did not appeal. Civil engineering was not in Frederick Weld's line and, Englishman to the core, he objected to going outside the shadow of the British flag. He was attracted by one alternative: colonisation in a new country.

The decision to go to New Zealand was not without family precedent since two of Frederick's cousins, Charles Clifford and William Vavasour, were already in the colony, having gone out on the George Fyffe in 1842. Equipped with a modest sum of gold sovereigns, New Zealand Company land orders for a town acre and one hundred country acres in Port Nicholson, and with an imagination fired by Bacon's vision of the heroic work of colonisation, Frederick Weld sailed from Plymouth on 29 November 1843.

The four month voyage in the 750 ton Theresa was eventful. Pirates, broken masts and a frequently drunk crew added to the natural hazards of the journey but the private store of tinned meat and Dutch cheese which Frederick had thoughtfully laid in to supplement the ship's fare of pea soup and salt pork kept his spirits buoyant. On 17 March 1844 he woke to the long awaited cry of 'Land'. 'Day dawned on a dull heaving sea' and he could just make out a low line of coast; then the sun rose behind the tall cone of Mount Egmont and he saw its 'glorious outline' against the morning sky. For a first view of New Zealand he could not have chosen better.

On 19 March the Theresa anchored off New Plymouth. Ashore that evening Frederick felt among friends at once for the tiny settlement consisted almost entirely of West Country folk only too willing to extend colonial hospitality to a Weld. Next morning he was off exploring in
the bush and the following day with Frederick Jerningham, a
shipboard companion, set out for the Waitara, 'a river afterwards
well known in New Zealand history'.

The *Theresa* sailed eventually for Nelson where most of a
rebellious crew were sent to prison 'or to such a substitute for
it as the place afforded'. During his fortnight at the settlement
Frederick stayed with Jerningham's cousin, Constantine
Dillon; met Francis Bell, afterwards New Zealand Company
agent at Nelson; and also went up the Waimea to the home of
George Duppa, a pioneer pastoralist of the Nelson-Marlborough
region. He landed in Wellington on St George's Day, 1844.2

New Zealand in its first few years of British rule was in a
state of confusion bordering on anarchy. Law and order could not
be enforced by incompetent though well-intentioned governors whose
authority, undermined from the start by inadequate financial and
military resources, was seriously challenged by those settlers who
were totally opposed to the humanitarian philosophy behind
official policy.

The unrealistic debate between systematic colonisers envisaging
New Zealand as a white man's preserve and humanitarians determined
to uphold Maori interests at all costs raged with disruptive bitterness
in these early years. Land was the principal focus of dispute. The

2. The principal source of information for Weld's first twenty years
is the 'Memoirs' which he wrote in 1886 and 1891, extracts of
which are reproduced in Alice, Lady Lovat, *The Life of Sir
'Memoranda and Memorabilia', an intermittent diary covering
the period 29 November 1843 - 17 December 1852, Weld
Papers, IV, NA, has a few very sketchy references to the
voyage and to Weld's activities on arrival.
protection of Maori rights embodied in the Treaty of Waitangi was a new departure in British colonial policy, and the Crown right of pre-emption over Maori land and the insistence that pre-Waitangi claims must be confirmed by Crown grant were severe blows to the ambitions of New Zealand Company directors. When Commissioner William Spain ruled that only a small proportion of the vast acreage claimed by the Company had been fairly purchased by its agent, Colonel William Wakefield, the disgruntled settlers blamed not Company malpractice but official interference for the delay in obtaining their land. The Wairau massacre of June 1843 was but the prelude to decades of conflict between the colonists' desire for land and the Maoris' determination to resist unlawful encroachment. Governor Robert FitzRoy earned himself the everlasting damnation of the Cook Strait settlers for correctly concluding that they were in the wrong and for refusing to take action against Te Rangihaeata and Te Rauparaha, the Wairau 'murderers'. Feeling against FitzRoy was still running high when the Theresa sailed into Nelson harbour some ten months later.³

Until his actual arrival in the colony Frederick Weld had given no real thought to the most fundamental problem of pioneering in New Zealand, the question of racial relations. To bring knowledge of the truth to savages seemed no unworthy object for his attention, but his mind had lingered far more on the imaginary excitement of pioneering in a wild country, on adventures with wild savages and hair-breadth

escapes by land and flood. Yet the attitude which Frederick adopted towards the Maori was, to some extent, predictable.

As a young colonist determined to make good he was to be resentful of any action, government or Maori, which impeded his progress to land ownership. A newcomer to Port Nicholson, he would be influenced adversely by the prevailing hostility towards the Governor's humanitarianism. But the virulence of his criticism of official policy stemmed from religious prejudice, not thwarted ambition. As a dogmatic Catholic Frederick Weld was opposed absolutely to Protestant activity in New Zealand: only if the doctrines of Exeter Hall had been Catholic inspired could he have upheld the humanitarian ideal.

One further aspect of his background conditioned his response to the situation of cultural contact: the unmistakable legacy of having been born an Englishman. As a true son of England Frederick brought with him an over-riding concern for British prestige, and an instinctive assumption of an inherent superiority - over Maori and lesser European alike. His church preached the equality of man but his society did not believe in it.

Although Frederick Weld's religion and education set him apart from the majority of early colonists in New Zealand, in his resolution to succeed he was at one with all who had come to the colony with high hopes of improving their fortunes. Many of the Company settlers, finding the land problems serious, sometimes insuperable setback became strongly antagonistic towards the Maori. Frederick reacted differently. He acquired a genuine liking and admiration for the native
New Zealander and in so doing evolved his own brand of humanitarianism. Such an attitude was not developed within the confines of Port Nicholson.
CHAPTER 11

FIRST YEAR IN THE WAIRARAPA: 1844-5

Had he been on his own in New Zealand at this time, Frederick might well have shared the fate of those Wakefieldian colonists whose resources dwindled as they waited anxiously in Port Nicholson for the land troubles to be settled. His town acre he found an enterprising blacksmith selling by the cartload for mortar; the country section was in an area of disputed possession, a discovery of some concern. Although Frederick had certainly never envisaged farming the land himself, an occupation he always regarded as more suited to labourers with large families, without a recognised deed of title he could not rent the land and so increase his capital. It was to be some years before the conflicting claims of Company purchasers and Maori occupants were resolved. Fortunately for Weld his family connections proved more reliable than Company propaganda.

Charles Clifford and William Vavasour had originally set up in Wellington as a firm of commission agents but Clifford, finding that there was little to be done in the town, had soon begun to look for a more lucrative source of investment. He was probably attracted to pastoralism by the obvious success of Australian colonists who were speculating in sheep. The idea had taken on definite appeal when, on a pioneering expedition to the Wairarapa with Vavasour and William Fox, later New Zealand Company agent in Port Nicholson, Clifford had

1. Lovat, p.20.
discovered magnificent pasture land in the valley. Negotiations with the local Maoris were so successful that Clifford obtained rent free some 30,000 acres at Wharekaka, east of the Ruamahanga river, near present day Martinborough. Clifford, Vavasour and Henry Petre, a fellow Catholic colonist, then pooled resources and Clifford went to Sydney to procure the sheep. Five hundred Merino and Southdown ewes were subsequently shipped to the settlement and were about to be driven to Wharekaka when Frederick Weld, with time on his hands, offered his services.

Establishing a sheep station in the 1840s involved far more than the acquisition of capital, land, stock and labour. There were all manner of practical problems to be considered. The pioneer pastoralists had to provide food and buildings, for instance, to cope with shearing, lambing, dipping and all the other routine details of sheep husbandry, to deal with wild dogs and fellow squatters and, if new-chums, they had to adapt to a way of life that was at once challenging and primitive. The founders of Wharekaka were enthusiastic and ignorant. They had the initiative to start a station, the finance to back it, and no knowledge whatsoever of how to run it. The sheep were to survive their first six months by sheer good luck, the men by sheer hard effort.

Frederick Weld responded to the risks and difficulties of pioneer pastoralism with an alacrity which surprised some of his distant

relatives and possibly even himself. These early years in the
Wairarapa are one of the most significant periods in his life and are
directly linked to many of his later activities as politician and
governor. Moreover, although one man's experience and the
vicissitudes of one pastoral venture are no bases for sweeping
generalisations on the nature of early New Zealand pastoralists and
pastoralism, an account of Weld at Wharekaka and later, Flaxbourne,
does give some insight into the conditions typical of those encountered
by the pioneers who laid the foundations of our economy.

Eight days before coming of age Frederick began his experience
of bush life. He and Petre, each with his roll of sleeping blanket and
a few indispensable articles wrapped up in it, met Vavasour on the
eastern side of the harbour before joining up with the flock, the
shepherd and the few men who had been hired to carry such essentials
as flour, salt pork, cooking utensils, guns and axes. Progress was
slow. The hills were steep, the animals weak after their voyage, the
men's loads heavy. It took eight days to bring the sheep round the
rocks of Baring Head and Palliser Bay to the edge of Lake Wairarapa,
some being lost in the effort. Then there was further delay. Negotiating
with the Maoris, 'the keenest hands in the world at a bargain', to
ferry the stock across the lake took some time. In the end, Weld
recalled, they received about twice as much as would have been asked

5. For example, one of Charles Clifford's sisters found it difficult to
understand why Frederick was going to New Zealand, and felt that
the experience would not be of much use to him, cit. Gaudin, p.12.
Even Frederick's mother seemed to have little idea of what he would
do in the colony, but she commended her son to Clifford's care,
assuring her nephew that in all efforts to promote the cause of
religion, Frederick would warmly second Charles. C.M.Weld to
Clifford, 16 November '1843', Clifford MSS.

6. The second station to be established. See Chapter 111.
by any English ferryman.

The bargain made, Petre returned to Wellington. Weld and Vavasour stayed at the whaling station of Te Kopi to await supplies sent from Port Nicholson, and the hired men took the flock on up the valley. A week passed but still no whaleboat appeared and Weld, realising that food would be in short supply at the station, decided to go ahead to Wharekaka to keep the men with the proceeds of his gun. He reached the site on 20 May, loaded with ducks and pigeons shot en route, 'a welcome addition to a nearly exhausted commissariat'.

He found a large barn-like structure, perforated on every side with open doors and window spaces, situated on a low damp bit of swamp and open to the rain on all sides - a stark contrast to stately Chideock. For the moment the defects hardly mattered. The pressing necessity was to keep the occupants supplied with food.

Weld quickly assumed the roles of game-keeper, commander-in-chief and general purveyor. He sent most of the men back down to Te Kopi, leaving himself with two companions, a shepherd lad who spent most of his time looking after the sheep, 'in other words sleeping'; and M.E., a young man whose principal characteristic was laziness but who undertook to cook whatever Weld shot. C.R. Bidwell was also encamped nearby and in these 'days of starvation', the pioneers shared provisions and ammunition.

7. cit. Lovat, pp. 21-23.
8. 'Memoranda', 20 May 1844.
At the first glimmer of dawn Weld was up and out into the swamps, disturbing the wild duck at their early breakfast 'in order to provide for ours'. Midday was generally spent in the bush, though not for some time did Weld discover the haunts of the wild pig. Pigeon or duck stew with wild cabbage was the staple supper diet if Weld's forays were successful. After a fortnight Weld became anxious as ammunition ran low and game in the area grew scarce and shy. But help was at hand. On 4 June Vavasour arrived at last and luxury was defined in colonial terms. 'What a night it was! ... oceans of pannican tea ... dough cakes quickly prepared ... salt pork - there was nothing wanting to the feast. Then ... a luxurious sleep on fresh fern covered with warm blankets which Vavasour had brought up with him. Thus ended a glorious evening.'

The first few months at Wharekaka were hard for man and beast alike. The shepherd turned out badly and the sheep were left to fend for themselves as the pioneers concentrated on their own survival. As in so many colonial situations, food shortages continued to be the major problem. The regular arrival of supplies despatched from Wellington could not be guaranteed; the young Englishmen had to aim at self-sufficiency. Weld proved surprisingly adaptable. He was constantly out shooting and hunting and set to work to clear and plant a garden. Yet the pioneers did not have to depend entirely on their own efforts. Pigs, potatoes and dried eels were obtained in exchange for tobacco from the Maori pa about a mile down river.

Living conditions were primitive. The original bark and reed hut (approximately 30' x 12') afforded little comfort in its doorless and

10. ibid., p.28.
windowless state with a roof 'about as competent to serve its destined purpose as a sieve or network', but the Maori builders had been paid and could not be persuaded to finish the job. Then, as the snows melted from the ranges after an exceptionally severe winter, the disadvantages of the low lying site became all too apparent. The first flood seemed fun at the time; as the water subsided leaving a thick miry coating on the walls and floor, enjoyment likewise abated.

Weld's recollections give no hint of black moods of despair. His faith and naturally equable temperament kept him optimistic yet he must have had some moments of doubt as to Wharekaka's future. The flock was in a miserable condition, many of the animals were diseased, and neither Weld nor Vavasour nor any of the 'useless lot' with them knew how to cope. Expert guidance was essential if this pioneer venture was not to be a disastrous failure.

A Scotsman saved the day. In the spring Clifford returned from attending FitzRoy's Legislative Council in Auckland, accompanied by Tom Caverhill, recently arrived in New Zealand after spending some years in New South Wales adapting his native Cheviot knowledge to colonial conditions. Caverhill was a 'first rate man' prepared, for

11. Weld Journal 1844-6, Weld Papers, IV, entry for 6 February 1845. Vavasour described the dwelling as a 'doorless, windowless, & chimneyless house; picturesque nevertheless'. W.Vavasour to W.B.D. Mantell, 19 September 1844, Mantell MSS., AT. Lovat, p.24 cites the cost of the 'house' as £25.
13. D. Cresswell, The Story of Cheviot, Christchurch, 1951, p.18. John Scott Caverhill, Tom's younger brother, was one of the original landowners in the Cheviot country and a neighbour of Clifford and Weld when the partners established Stonyhurst, their second South Island station. ibid., p.20.
a wage of £40 a year, \textsuperscript{14} to apply his sorely needed skills at Wharekaka. His first action was to take the sheep off the wet plains and up to the hills. Their recovery was rapid.

Not too proud to learn from a Scot, Weld threw himself heart and soul into the work, thoroughly mastering it in all its branches - or so he claimed - sleeping out at night to guard the flock from wild dogs, going amongst the sheep until he felt he knew most of them by their faces and general appearance. His greatest ambition at this time was to be a first class bushman and sheep farmer, though he was beginning to feel 'transmogrified into a shepherd'.\textsuperscript{15}

His enthusiasm and application were rewarded. When Petre decided to withdraw his capital, preferring to speculate in horses, Clifford offered Weld the quarter share. He did so primarily because Weld had shown himself exceedingly active, energetic and sensible, with a great liking for the style of life; secondly because it was absolutely essential that a partner should reside on the spot, and Clifford sensed that Vavasour was unlikely to settle at the station, or in the colony for that matter. Clifford was too shrewd a businessman to act out of charity. Convinced that he was doing Weld a great service in enabling him to turn his capital to immediate profit in an established station when he could not have had enough to set up on his own, Clifford felt his intelligent and gentlemanly cousin merited the help: 'I have seldom met with a young fellow of whom I have formed a higher opinion.'\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{center}
\textsuperscript{14} Gaudin, p.18.
\textsuperscript{15} cit. Lovat, p.50.
\textsuperscript{16} /Clifford to Sir Edward Vavasour, c. September/October 1844/\textsuperscript{7} Clifford MSS.
\end{center}
Weld was to gain a good deal from his connection with Clifford. Already one of Port Nicholson's leading settlers, thanks to a combination of initiative, ambition and family finance, Clifford was soon active in colonial affairs as a JP and, for a short time, as a member of FitzRoy's Legislative Council, and this involvement was to increase steadily over the next decade. Weld genuinely liked and respected his cousin but felt he was a man who had to be known to be appreciated; "he has much more in him than would appear at first sight - a clear cool head and much depth and warmth of feeling".  

Financial arrangements were completed by the end of October, thus relieving Weld on two accounts. He now had a secure investment for his modest sum of sovereigns and an anomalous situation had been resolved. Once established as part-owner, it was legitimate for Weld to act in the role of master which he had assumed instinctively.

The labour force at Wharekaka was small. Apart from Caverhill and Joe, 'the fat boy', Weld and Vavasour generally employed one or two Maoris and occasionally another European. Within a couple of months the partners also had a young Maori boy living with them, attracted, Weld thought, by good food and clothing and perfectly ignorant that he was considered a servant.

Food, land and labour resources were the mainspring of cultural contact in the Wairarapa, and the Wharekaka owners were fortunate from the outset. There was no initial conflict over land, local Ngati Kahungungu readily supplied food, and the only major point of dispute in the first six months was the uncompleted hut. But Weld, together with most of his fellow colonists, never appreciated the full extent of

17. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 1 July 1846, Weld Papers, I, No.3.
his dependence on Maori goodwill. In later life he partially recognised the limits of his understanding in this period, but at the time his emotional reaction was a mixture of reserve, superiority, tolerance and curiosity, as his earliest surviving comment reveals.

I am lying down on a mat in my little 'ware' or hut, before me on the ground is a fire, and on it a pot boiling with some pork for dinner. I had just begun to write this when in walked a native chief, and with him half a dozen of his retainers, and laid himself down by my side. So you may fancy me now, lying down writing with my visitors round me all watching the motions of my pen with the greatest interest, never dreaming that I am in the act of describing them. The chief, who is much tattooed, is rather a handsome, I may say gentlemanly-looking, savage. He is draped in an English blanket and wears a shark's tooth in his ear by way of ornament ... This chief is a great friend of mine. He calls himself sometimes Wetterike (Frederick) and me Narro (his name). He sells me potatoes and pigs for tobacco, and threatens to break any man's head who steals from me, so I sometimes give him a cup of tea as a great luxury, and a bit of hearth cake or dough-nut. At my feet is my little native lad dressed in white trousers, and a blue sailor's shirt, his head ornamented with white albatross feathers. On the other side of the fire are two or three natives and a little boy; one is dressed in an old counterpane, and the rest in mats of their own manufacture, some of which are very curious and beautiful. I see one of them is looking intently at my iron soup-pot, but he is very much mistaken if he thinks he will get my dinner. The worst of these visitors is that they are sometimes given to thieving, and as I am alone in the house this week (Vavasour has gone to Wellington to get seeds for the garden) I am obliged to remain indoors all the time they stay. It is not often I let in so many. I am expecting every day the arrival of John Ross (a local sawyer) to finish the house, and shall be very glad when we get the doors up as we shall then be able to keep the natives out without any difficulty. 19

19. ibid., pp.51-52.
Though Weld's own daily encounters with his Maori neighbours were the chief influence on what was to prove the most important legacy of his pioneering life, the development of his native policy was also affected by views currently expressed in Port Nicholson, opinions which Weld heard whenever Vavasour returned from the settlement or when Clifford paid one of his rare visits to Wharekaka. Clifford was a stringent critic of the FitzRoy system, membership of the Legislative Council notwithstanding, and Weld had a welcome opportunity for a prolonged exchange with his cousin when the partners arranged an expedition in search of more land.

Although the original selection was extensive, the winter and its aftermath had exposed one major drawback: the main Wharekaka plain was prone to flooding and an alternative winter pasture was needed. In November Clifford, Weld and Vavasour set off for 'Ware-homa' (?Whareama) where, their Maori guides assured them, they would find a solution to their problem. But the land of 'Ware-homa' was ankle-deep in water, covered with reed grass and filled with pig ruts and, in any case, too far from Wharekaka to have been of real use. 20

Weld enjoyed the expedition, despite the disappointment, for he felt he had learned a good deal about the habits and ways of the Maoris in the vicinity. He also relished the chance of discussion with Clifford and was no doubt pleased to find that he and his cousin were in complete agreement on the most vital issue of colonial affairs. FitzRoy's method of dealing with the Maoris presaged disaster.

20. ibid., p. 59. For a published description of the journey, see Lovat, pp. 52-60; for a full account, Weld Journal 1844-6, entries for 22-29 November 1844.
It is very difficult to judge of the native unless you have lived with them as we do here. A savage, when his passions are dormant and he is treated as a companion and friend, is quite as safe — probably more so — than two-thirds of the Europeans you meet in these colonies. It is true that the foolish conduct of the Governor in allowing the natives to take the law into their own hands, and not allowing equal justice to white man and Maori, 21 have estranged the settlers from the natives. But even now if he comes to their houses he invariably receives food, and seldom goes away without a present of tobacco or a trifle of that sort. If disputes occur it is undoubtedly owing to the policy of Hobson and Fitzroy and the Exeter Hall philanthropists who have persuaded the natives that they may do anything and everything with impunity .... All that we have seen, both on this occasion and on previous ones, confirms what we have been told ever since we came into the country, and that is, that the natives who have come under the Fitzroy-cum-missionary influence have not gained much by it. The principal tenets of the so-called Christian natives is that if they read the Bible and chant hymns twice a day they are sure to go to heaven. Now the natives who have to do with the whalers, instead of the Bible distributors, when they steal or break their bargains are brought to their senses by an application of Jack's fists; on the other hand, when they behave well he is ready enough to share his 'baccy' with them and treat them kindly. The consequence is that where Jack Tar has been Governor and missionary the natives are honest, and proud of their white men. If Fitzroy had followed the sailors' example of wholesome severity and well-timed kindness, all these difficulties about non-fulfilment of bargains with the Maoris would never have happened. The authorities will some day find out their mistake. A sound thrashing is the only cure for the arrogance of some of these chiefs, and the general opinion is that the sooner it is administered the better. 22

Weld was an ardent advocate of the supposed whalers' system largely because his own experience was confirming the efficacy of this

approach. At Wharekaka there has been no real dispute to date and Weld prided himself that by being just and firm he had evolved a successful policy for dealing with the native New Zealander. Subsequent events were to reinforce his belief. Although he was to be occasionally disconcerted by differences with individuals and by rumours of Maori unrest elsewhere in the valley, at no time was Weld himself molested nor Wharekaka attacked by disgruntled Maoris.

Clifford and Weld always laid great stress on their being at Wharekaka by the express invitation of the rightful owners of the land and the novelty value of being the first Europeans in the district had worked to their advantage. But other colonists had been quick to follow their example and the steady influx of would-be pastoralists had created problems. Maori spokesmen pointed out to Clifford that newcomers to the valley could not be given land rent free, yet could not be charged unless the Wharekaka squatters agreed to pay for their lease. The argument was accepted and the annual rent fixed initially at £12.23

On their return from 'Ware-homa', the partners heard rumours that their 'title' was likely to be disputed. Clifford immediately returned to Wellington to investigate while Weld and Vavasour endeavoured to make a firm arrangement with the local Maoris. For the first time Weld struck determined resistance. The Maoris wanted a higher payment and the partners had to agree. For rental purposes Wharekaka was divided into two sections, each costing £12, separated by an area of plain which one particular Maori, known as E Meri, refused to lease.24

23. *Royal Colonial Institute: Report of Proceedings*, XIV, 113. The original receipts are included in a folder of undated correspondence, Clifford MSS.

24. Weld Journal 1844-6 16 December 1844.
Weld was confident that the opposition would prove shortlived. Station life continued as normal. His débüt at sheep shearing went off with wonderful éclat and the garden was flourishing. Radishes, turnips, cabbages, young Scottish kale, potatoes, peas, carrots, beans, celery, parsley, watermelon, pumpkin, onions, lettuce, sweet peas, sweet williams and stocks were thriving at Wharekaka and Weld proudly recorded that the superiority of his garden over all those in the upper part of the district was now fully acknowledged. Christmas Day was duly celebrated with local resources: 'Sent a kit of turnips to Bidwell's as a present & borrowed a bottle of grog .... Dinner we had Ducks, Pigeons, Leg of Mutton, Plum Dough, butter milk tea scones soup Grog in the evening.'

Māoris continued their social calls and Weld entered into a potato planting partnership by which he was to supply all the seed potato and his partner, Pirika, the land and labour, a very remarkable offer for a Māori to make in Weld's view, and it was to have consequences. '11 Jan - another early morning bedside visitor - Naero Tu - come to make friends & plant his potatoes.'

Plans for a new house were well under way. By early February the dwelling was completed. Weld spent an afternoon fitting up his room, dividing it off with a curtain from the stores. By the time he had finished he felt that even a man who had never been out of England would have called it rough and neat and he could scarcely believe his own senses at finding himself in a floored room, sitting on a makeshift bed, writing on a table with book and desk in front of him. The old times of Wharekaka seemed over. But celebration was premature: '26 Feb a miserably rainy day the roof letting in the water

---

25. Weld Journal 1844-6, entries for 17-26 December 1844; 2, 11 January 1845.
in every direction – could not keep in a fire everything wet and dirty. A few months ago we should have thought nothing of this but when one has begun to make things look neat and accustomed oneself to comparative comfort it is enough to vex a saint to see everything wretched ....' But there was one gain from the deluge. The rain at least spelt an end to the mosquito plague, the 'miniature vampires' having driven Weld mad at first with their hateful buzzing and relentless attacks and their failure even to respect the Englishman's privilege of a growl without intruding by scores into the sanctuary of his mouth.  

E Meri remained steadfastly opposed to leasing the plains but Weld did not regard the situation in terms of personal conflict. He saw the opposition as symptom of much wider discontent, of the unrest caused by the 'Fitzroy-cum-missionary' policy and aggravated by the Governor's patent inability to quell the rebellious Hone Heke and Kawiti in the north. FitzRoy's failure in the Bay of Islands was ample encouragement to trouble-makers in the south, to Te Rangihaeata in particular, who was supporting Taringa Kuri of the Ngatitama in the latter's occupation of the Hutt Valley despite Commissioner Spain's decision that the New Zealand Company purchase was, in this instance, fair. Disturbances in the north and at the Hutt in turn encouraged the more intractable of the Wairarapa natives. The local situation deteriorated, Weld argued, when newcomers to the valley were weak and indecisive in their dealings with the Maoris.

A minor local dispute broke out in February 1845. Strongly critical of the European concerned, Weld was disturbed to find that the outcome of this lack of resolution against outrageous Maori demands was a disposition to plunder on the part of the Maoris further up the

26. ibid., 6, 26 February, 26 March 1845.
valley. But he did not doubt that in the event of any real trouble the Wairarapa squatters could handle it well. They would band together in self defence 'and if when attacked we should prove victorious as we would, we should have the honour of settling the question of European supremacy in arms & of doing more to pacify the country than the Government have done for years'. However, Weld did not really think that personal violence would be directed against any settler, except in the case of what he termed ill-advised resistance.

Catholic prejudice and British pride conditioned his attitude as he set the local conflict in its broader perspective. When news of the battle of Kororareka (11 March) reached the Wairarapa, to Weld it marked scene one of the tragedy which the FitzRoy policy was in the course of enacting. Vavasour arrived at the station on 3 April bringing press and verbal accounts of the destruction. The reports reinforced Weld's antagonism to Protestant activity and FitzRoy misrule. Heke had reputedly killed one of his own men for slaying a child, 'a trait of generosity which makes one regret that he should have been encouraged to place himself in his present attitude by the Governor's foolish want of firmness.... I should also have mentioned that the only neighbouring tribe that did not join Hekī [sic] were the ... Catholic natives not one of whom joined in the battle or in the pillage. Hekī's tribe are Protestants.'

Firmness continued to be the keynote of Weld's own policy, as indeed it was the demand of most Company colonists, but when at the

28. cit. Lovat, pp.62-63. The European concerned was Barton, not Barlow as reproduced in Lovat.
29. Weld Journal 1844-6, 5 March - 7 April 1845.
end of May the Maoris refused to renew the Wharekaka lease, Weld was perturbed. The controversy was over the piece of land which he had enclosed and for which the Maoris demanded separate payment. Weld pretended to be unmoved by threats, but he was certainly anxious. Again he felt the dispute was related to the wider problem; a victory in the north at this juncture he considered would do a great deal for the Cook Strait settlers. Another six months of indecision and FitzRoy policy and all would be lost. 30

Fortunately the local difference was settled amicably when 'Her Ladyship E Meri' came to Weld, offering to give up not only the disputed paddock but the whole of the ground in between the two sections of the run in return for a third payment. The compromise was accepted. The rental was increased to £36, a not inconsiderable sum in Weld's opinion, but he was pleased to have got out of the bother with some degree of good fortune 'and with the honour (in the eyes of the natives) of not having yielded to their threats but to the quiet proposition of a woman'. 31

Weld was in the habit of marking anniversaries and his journal for May 1845 mentions three: of his starting for the Wairarapa, the arrival of the sheep, and '20 May anniversary of my arrival at Wharekaka'. The events were worth noting, for the twelve months just passed were the most important of any single year in Weld's life.

Weld had learned much at Wharekaka. He had experienced at first hand just what pioneering really involved, the isolation, the discomfort, the hard work, the risks, the personal satisfaction

30. ibid., 31 May 1845.
31. ibid., 1, 2, June 1845.
whenever a goal was achieved. He was also developing a greater awareness of the problems involved in cultural contact. But though he had a working knowledge of the language and exhibited a degree of racial tolerance not shared by many of his colonial contemporaries, Weld's understanding of the Maori was limited. He had no real idea of Maori land ownership, for instance, and he tended to view Maori resistance to European advance as an intolerable challenge to British sovereignty.

For Weld's prime concern was with British prestige and the future of the British colonist in New Zealand, not with the future of the Maori as such. He failed to appreciate the vital economic role which the native New Zealanders were playing in securing that future for himself and his fellow colonists, and it certainly never occurred to him that the Maori might be gaining less than the European from this contact of cultures. Weld was completely sincere in his desire to be just as well as firm towards the Maori but he failed to recognise the contradiction implicit in his attitude. A strict application of justice for the Maori would sometimes mean putting the colonists' and therefore British interests in second place. Such an order of priority Weld could never accept.

Twelve months in the bush had also had its effect on Frederick Weld as a person. At twenty what little self-assurance he possessed stemmed from his religious faith and social poise. On his arrival in New Zealand he would have impressed an impatient acquaintance as dull. A more sympathetic observer might have sensed that Weld's reserve indicated shyness and lack of self-confidence; he believed in his own potential but needed to feel he had proved himself to others as well as to himself. This was where Wharekaka helped. At the
station Weld was thrown into a situation which he mastered and enjoyed. He proved he could adapt to difficult conditions and he responded with determined effort to the confidence which Clifford placed in him.

The decision to come to New Zealand was in fact the most momentous that Frederick Weld ever made. It opened the way to a personal and financial independence which he could never have attained in England and he used his opportunities to the full. Perseverance - and Caverhill - were making Weld a good sheep farmer; pastoralism was to give him the freedom and security to enter politics; colonial politics were to be sound training for the role of colonial governor. But for the moment Weld's attention was focussed on sheep.
'WHARE KAKA'

Pencil Drawing by William Mein Smith [c. 1845]
Copied from the original in the Alexander Turnbull Library
CHAPTER 111

PIONEERING: 1845-8

In April 1845 Vavasour left Wharekaka for the last time. He had decided to return to England, a decision which gave Weld a sense of personal loss and Clifford financial complications. As far as the pastoral venture was concerned, however, Vavasour's move finalised the Clifford-Weld alliance. Clifford, with three-quarters of the shares, was the dominant business partner handling the mercantile side in Wellington; Weld, making up in energy what he lacked in capital, dealt with affairs on the spot and had no doubts about the wisdom of so doing. Sheep farming was clearly the most promising field for speculation at this time and prospects in the Wairarapa were particularly bright for established squatters. The partners could expect a good return for their capital, Weld reasoned, if they ran Wharekaka economically and continued to increase their flock with careful attention to breed, for when they had sheep to sell, what newcomer would not prefer buying his stock locally?

Clifford and Weld themselves still drew stock from New South Wales. In March 1845 more ewes arrived at the station and the

---

1. 'Memoranda', 15 April 1845.
2. Sir Edward Vavasour, William's father, had provided most of the finance behind the original Clifford-Vavasour business venture and Clifford was faced with heavy liabilities in the event of Vavasour wishing to withdraw his capital. See Gaudin, pp. 3, 27-28.
Wharekaka flock, calculated in October 1844 as 450 Merino and Southdown ewes and about 250 lambs, was, by the following May, put at 900 ewes and 80 wethers besides rams, at least three of the latter having come from MacArthur's prize flock. Caverhill was hopeful of a 90% lambing in the 1845 summer, and the partners had also arranged to winter sheep on terms at 1/6d a head, a very profitable proposition in Weld's view.

Weld had more confidence than ever in the success of the station — excepting always the possibility of a native outbreak or the termination of their lease. Should the land be offered for sale the Wharekaka squatters, like patriarchs of old, would have to strike their tents and drive their flocks to districts more remote. But the risk seemed slight. Weld felt it would not pay anyone to farm intensively so far from Port Nicholson, and he did not think that the soil of a large portion of the valley would be suitable for agriculture. Maori unrest was more likely, however, for though Wharekaka was undisturbed, other settlers in the Wairarapa were being troubled by petty aggression. Weld sympathised with the irritation of the squatters concerned; 'it must be owned that it is disgusting enough when everything is uniting to crown ones labours with success to see every prospect of being ruined by wretches who last year had hardly a rag to cover them and who are now through us in receipt of nearly 200£ a year and are supplied with all they desire in exchange for their commodities wh/ich/ otherwise would have remained without a market'. It would be

5. cit. Lovat, p.49.
9. Weld Journal 1844-6, 26 June 1845.
difficult to imagine a less perceptive comment on who was helping whom.

The greater the prospect of success, the more frustrated Weld became with what he saw as FitzRoy’s bungling in the north. British prestige was suffering a severe blow at the hands of this fanatical humanitarian. In Weld’s opinion the fate of the entire colony depended on an unmistakable assertion of British supremacy in the north—where military efforts to retrieve FitzRoy’s disasters were proving a succession of misfortunes. When he heard of the siege of Ohaeawai (24 June – 1 July) Weld exploded. Revolted by reports of cannibalism, Weld was beside himself with rage that Protestant missionaries, ‘true to their proteges to the last’, dared attempt to palliate or deny the atrocities ‘and even stood up boldly in defence of the monsters who say psalms the very night that they perpetrated their cannibal orgies.’ Fury, frustration and prejudice poured forth from Weld’s pen.

Will you believe it when I tell you that the very evening that these infamies were committed these truly ‘protestant and evangelical natives’ say their usual psalms and canticles with lips purpled with the blood of human beings? —you will hardly believe this fact—what then will be your indignation to hear that men exist—men calling themselves ‘missionaries Ministers of the God of Truth’ who after encouraging these poor savages to evil by pandering to their every inclination under the cloak of ‘philanthrophy’ in order to serve their own interested ends—after betraying their own countrymen in every possible way—and after bringing on a state of things which has cost hundreds of lives and may cost thousands—who after doing all this stand up and dare to insult man and blaspheme God by speaking of the ‘piety’ and noble nature of their ‘converts’—not of their ‘converts’ in general but of the very men whose atrocities I shrink from relating—Converts indeed!—‘Converts’!—I have seen something of savages during the time I have lived amongst them—in the simple savage I have pitied

10. Rutherford, p.79.
11. Weld Journal 1844-6, September 1845.
The state of almost brutal degradation to which God's image is reduced, but still I have admired the occasional gleams which tell that that image though dimmed and obscured is understood and may yet shine forth in glory under happier auspices - but in the protestant native - I have seen the brutality of the savage with the canting hypocrisy of the sanctimonious minister - most of the vices of the wild state with none of its virtues - a strange undigested compound of the worst points of barbarism & civilisation - but I shall never have done if I go on at this rate - the night is far gone so I must end my Anti Exeter Hall Rhapsodies and tomorrow having cooled down I shall proceed somewhat more soberly.

Morning brought little change. No words, Weld thought, could express the wretched state of the colony. FitzRoy was universally believed to be mad, and in charity, Weld added, it was to be hoped that the Governor's frantic acts did arise from insanity. All was quiet and well in the south but the news from the north had created a fresh feeling of enmity against the Maoris - and against Henry Williams and his fellow protestant missionaries who counselled FitzRoy to a policy of conciliation and who sought to exonerate the rebels from accusations of cannibalism.

I heard a working man say last night - and it is an illustration of the sentiments of the people here - 'Oh the Maoris poor devils were good fellows once & would be now but those d-d missionaries spoilt them' and then he launched out into aspirations of revenge - it is indeed dreadful to think how much evil has been brought about & how easily it might have been avoided. A firm hand and steady head may put things to rights yet. These southern natives are much less formidable than the Nn ones. They see that troops keep arriving & are anxious to have white men amongst them & I dont in the least anticipate an outbreak here. You see events have proved all my former judgements & prophecies true so you may believe me when I solemnly assure you that I believe we and even our property are perfectly safe in this part of the island and shall continue so if the troops continue to act with spirit at the north - and you must remember that the commercial & agricultural depression
but slightly affects us sheep breeders - and in fact we
Company settlers may probably be great gainers by the
deplorable calamities which have fallen on the Govt
settlements in the N.-- I have only to add that I have
never yet heard any settler say a word against a
Catholic missionary.\textsuperscript{12}

For some months Weld threw his journal aside, so sickened
and disgusted was he with FitzRoy's 'follies and extravagance'.
Then the outlook changed. New Zealand acquired a governor who
appeared to Weld to have the vigour and firmness requisite to deal
with the evils which had accumulated under FitzRoy until they threat-
ened to overwhelm the colony in utter ruin.\textsuperscript{13} George Grey had arrived.\textsuperscript{14}

Grey achieved dramatic success during his first few months in
office. By January 1846 he had brought peace to the north and was able
to turn his attention to the Cook Strait settlers who, insecure in the
land tenure and neglected by Government and Company alike, were
in dire need of strong leadership. Grey reached Port Nicholson on
12 February 1846 together with 500 troops. Hearing the news on his
return from an expedition to Pahaua,\textsuperscript{15} Weld made rapid tracks to
Wellington, pausing only to ponder as he passed by the Hutt whether
the time might soon come when the efforts of European and native
combined would render the beautiful yet almost uncultivated valley
below him a scene of 'happiness and prosperous content to the semi-

\begin{enumerate}
\item[12.] Weld to Humphrey Weld, n.d. \textsuperscript{7}\textsuperscript{7}\textsuperscript{7} postmarked 17 September 1845\textsuperscript{7},
Weld Papers, I, No.1.
\item[13.] Weld Journal 1844-6, September 1845, February 1846.
\item[14.] Rutherford, chapters 8-19 is a valuable guide to the principal
events of the years 1845-53 and I have drawn heavily upon it
to explain the background of many of Weld's actions and
comments during this period. For the Anglo-Maori conflicts
of the 1840's note also I. Wards, The Shadow of the Land,
Wellington, 1968.
\item[15.] 'Memoranda', c.17 February 1846.
\end{enumerate}
civilised Maori as well as to the stout emigrant from the fair fields of Merrie England'.

The Governor's presence in Fort Nicholson was clearly a cause for celebration, the self-styled 'Gentlemen of Wellington' even bestirring themselves to give a grand ball for His Excellency and about 100 officers during a week of fun and excitement. But Grey was not in town for the hospitality, however pleasant the settlers might have found it.

Three areas above all demanded the Governor's attention: the Hutt, Porirua and the settlement at Wanganui. Grey first concentrated on the Hutt. He visited the valley and convinced Taringa Kuri that the disputed land would have to be evacuated before any claims to compensation for abandoned crops would be considered. Weld warmly approved Grey's refusal to countenance the chief's alternative of compensation before evacuation. Many men less decided than Grey would have acted otherwise, Weld thought, and the consequence would have been endless uncertainty, while those Maoris who had already left would have regretted having done so.

Grey's personal demeanour also won him support from 'the Gentlemen', all of whom were in high spirits at his decisiveness. If the Governor carried on as he had commenced, Weld predicted, he would be all but worshipped in the settlement. 'He appears quiet uncommunicative very decided - not above asking information before he makes up his mind - dignified & strict to his officials but very affable to the settlers & apparently much interested in everything we have done - in every respect the reverse of his predecessors.'

16. Weld Journal 1844-6, February 1846.
17. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 26 February 1846, Weld Papers, I, No. 2.
Weld was confident that if things could yet be put to rights then Grey would do it. 'Of course we have hardly had time to judge of him yet, but so far - so good.'

But Grey's standing in Cook Strait depended essentially on his handling of the land question and when colonists attempted to resettle the Hutt, they again met with Maori resistance. Two hundred troops sent to the Lower Hutt were completely outmanoeuvred by small raiding parties directed by the real source of opposition, Te Rangihaeata. The settlers fled to Wellington for safety. Grey proclaimed martial law, strengthened the local militia forces and took a detachment of troops to Porirua, Te Rangihaeata's stronghold. No clear charges could be laid against the chief; Grey was forced to accept his assurances that he was not helping the disaffected Maoris. The Cook Strait colonists, warm in their praise of Grey's resolution up to this point, now felt that he was adopting half measures which could only aggravate the situation.

After a rapid and successful visit to calm anxieties at Wanganui, Grey returned to Wellington to be faced with an open challenge to British authority in the Hutt. Te Rangihaeata eluded Grey's attempts to apprehend him while Te Rauparaha, who Grey was sure was involved, was 'full of amiable professions'. Grey resolved to bide his time. With the limited forces available he aimed to hold two sides of the Wellington - Hutt - Porirua triangle, a defensive strategy which was partly the outcome of necessity but also very much in keeping with the Governor's belief that a 'judicious blend of firmness and friendliness would do more to pacify most of the Maoris and to bring them to

18. loc. cit.
respect British sovereignty than a full scale military campaign.

In April Grey went back to Auckland and the weakness of his position was exposed. While the inadequate British forces stood on the defensive, the initiative lay with their opponents: they used their advantage well when Major Mathew Richmond foolishly disbanded part of the militia and reduced the Hutt garrison. On 16 May the Maoris attacked an outpost of the Hutt stockade yet Richmond refused to disobey Grey's strict orders that no aggressive operations were to be commenced without his express command. In the six weeks before Grey was informed and could return to Wellington 200 Maoris led by a Wanganui chief Te Mamaku continued to harass the settlers and military alike, to the utter disgust of the local colonists. 19 Weld was amongst the disillusioned, but his criticisms were levelled far more against Richmond and the regular troops than against Grey or the local militia.

The real cause of the trouble, it seemed to Weld, was the regulars' basic dislike of a service which entailed too much hard work and too little credit to please them; 'they are content if they keep the acre of ground confided to them to guard - hold the bush in horror - and fervently pray that they may be removed to some more comfortable quarters'. This disgrace of the British name was made even worse in Weld's eyes by the small number of Maoris involved, a mere 200 'brigands' who were, Weld was convinced, dreaded and detested for their atrocities by every peaceful native in New Zealand. If only the local blue-shirts were given a chance Weld had no doubt of a successful outcome but, as he had overheard a militia man say

of the officers and troops; 'they'll neither do the job themselves - nor let any as can do the job do't'.

On 2 July Grey arrived and the situation was transformed. The Governor was determined to break the Maori resistance but he did not formulate specific plans until he had evidence that Te Rauparaha was involved in communications between Te Rangihaeata and Te Mamaku. Then Grey sprang into action. His surprise arrest of Te Rauparaha, the consequent retreat of Te Rangihaeata and the dispersal of the latter's forces proved the prelude to peace in the south.

Weld's involvement in the various campaigns of 1846 is not quite clear. The leading role which Lovat accords him in one of the Porirua incidents seems exaggerated. His knowledge of the surrounding country would have made him a useful guide, but if Weld was active militarily, he did not distinguish himself so gloriously as to occasion special press comment. Nevertheless the incidents of the first six months of 1846 are particularly important for their influence on Weld's developing attitudes. His initial impression of Grey was confirmed as the Governor continued to act with deliberation and success and Weld's respect and admiration for him increased, though by no means to the point of hero-worship. Grey's native policy above all ensured him of Weld's support since he felt that there was a clear parallel between the Governor's resolution and the firm handling of the native New Zealander which Weld himself advocated. As for the military, the very 'inertness' and 'old womanism'

---

20. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 1 July 1846, Weld Papers, I, No. 3.
of their officers had made the imperial troops an object of mirth and derision to the insurgent natives and of grave disappointment to a proud Englishman. Within two decades Weld's belief in the superiority of colonial forces composed of men accustomed to local conditions was to find political expression - and was to prove justified.

In the Wairarapa all was quiet and, Weld assured his family always anxious for news from their 'New Zealand savage', Wharekaka was in no danger from the malcontents. Rather, Weld noted, the local Maoris had entered entirely into the European side of the question and were most indignant that Te Rangihauata should molest Te Puni's white men. The station was now firmly established; more Merinos had arrived in May, this time English stud, and the venture was prospering, so much so that Caverhill could foresee problems. The maximum carrying capacity of Wharekaka he estimated at 3,000 but the possibility of obtaining more land in the Wairarapa diminished with the advent of every aspiring sheep farmer. Then, on the strength of a conversation overheard in Barrett's Hotel, Clifford and Weld sailed to Cape Campbell in September 1846. They were impressed with the area and Clifford was quick to open negotiations with Rawiri Kingi Puha, then residing at Porirua. His overtures were 'very kindly received' by Puha who, presumably with his tribe's approval, agreed to lease Clifford and Weld all the land from the Blind River to the west coast, round Cape Campbell to Kekerengu, some 200,000 to 300,000 acres, for £12 per annum. South Island expansion had begun and Weld had the change he needed.

23. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 1 July 1846.
24. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 26 February 1846.
25. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 1 July 1846.
26. 'Memoranda', May 1846.
After two years in the colony Weld was becoming restless. He could look upon his activities at Wharekaka with some sense of satisfaction of a challenge well met, but with all of a twenty-three year old's burning desire to do something worthwhile with his life, he needed a new focus for his energies. News that Clifford intended a visit home added to this unsettled feeling for Weld feared that his cousin might seriously object to his doing likewise. 'It may be said that after being in England I should not again settle down to lead the life I do - I think I should be doing both yourself and me injustice were I to suppose that you do not know me well enough by this time to be able to trust to what I can and will do. Besides I like this wild kind of life only I want a vacation sometimes.'

A more valid argument in Weld's view was his relative poverty. A trip home would seem a great loss of time and money. 'To this I answer - with your consent I am determined to start homewards in about two years and nothing on earth except of course your wish shall keep me away for a much longer period.'

It has been said that 'three years in the bush unfits a man for the purposes of civilized society' I don't hold that doctrine. I consider that a man who is a gentleman by birth and education will always remain such, as long as he retains his self respect as a Catholic - but yet were I to remain many years without mingling again in English and family society I do feel, not that I should think less - or less affectionately of you but that it might have a dis-advantageous effect on my future life which by Gods help is not all to be spent in managing a station in exploring wilds in hunting boars - or in negotiating high treaties & compacts with my blanketted allies.²⁹

²⁹. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 1 July 1846.
Weld was not at all convinced that his future lay in New Zealand. He thought (mistakenly) did look upon the colony as home, and this Weld considered natural since Clifford’s name, character and the ample means at his disposal rendered his cousin by far the most influential man in the colony. But Clifford was an older man, already involved in colonial affairs. Weld brim-full of youthful enthusiasm had come to the antipodes not to get away from England but to make good and return. England would always be Home. In time he would also become very attached to New Zealand but for Weld, as for so many of his contemporaries, the process of mental adaptation was slow - as an extract from his sentimental poem, 'Night on the Ruamahanga', reveals only too well.

But as my hand just guides the floating bark
In gazing on the stars that beam above
Deep in the summer heaven - that same moon
Has smiled, as here she smiles - on sleeping fields
And villages in England's blessed isle -
Silvering the hedgerow elm, the rose and vine
That wreath the cottage porch - and the lawn
Mid the dark beeches shade & gnarled oak
Throwing her light in patches - whilst the dew
Glistens on King-cup and on cowslip bell
Loved by the Fairies - Oh how dear
Is home unto the wanderer, whose bold foot
Hath circled half the globe! ...

Clifford went to Sydney at the end of March 1847 to buy stock for the new station of Flaxbourne and the partners planned to bring their best Wharekaka sheep to the South Island the following summer.

30. loc. cit.
31. 'Night on the Ruamahanga', 3 April 1846, Weld MSS., No. 56.
32. Weld to Christina Weld, 10 April 1847, Weld Papers, I, No. 5.
Weld intended to go over in May in order to get buildings under way but he was delayed by illness and only just reached the station before Clifford returned in July.  

Weld was excited at the prospect of a new environment, above all because he would be living by the sea and with a yacht would be much closer to Wellington than he was at Wharekaka. His principal worry was finance. He needed to invest every penny he could scrape together to keep pace with Clifford in founding the new station, but when the year’s profits from Wharekaka proved insufficient to pay Weld’s fourth share in Flaxbourne Clifford again came to his cousin’s aid by offering a loan of £500. Weld was elated. The interest was only 10%, quite the lowest rate available he thought, and if their affairs continued to prosper then, Weld calculated, the returns from both stations should enable him to pay off both interest and capital within two years. On the other hand, if Wharekaka were sold, that would obviously pay off his loan at once and put money in his pocket as well.

33. Weld to Apollonia Weld, 1 May 1848, Weld MSS., No. 1, NE, 17 July 1847, p. 76c reported Clifford’s arrival with 900 out of 1600 sheep put on a chartered barque at Sydney, and noted that a total of 4,000 was expected.

34. Weld to Christina Weld, 10 April 1847.

35. loc. cit.

36. Weld to Humphrey Weld, n.d. [postmarked 23 November 1847], Weld Papers, I, No. 6. Weld maintained he hated writing about business affairs, probably because he did not want his family to feel obliged to assist him any further financially. This is the only reference which indicates the amount his original sum of sovereigns might have entailed, for a quarter share of Wharekaka probably cost £500-£600, a calculation in keeping with Weld’s later suggestion that £2,000-£3,000 was the most profitable amount to invest in sheep farming. See below, Chapter IV.
But though Clifford and Weld toyed with the idea of selling the Wairarapa holding at this time, nothing came of it, and Wharekaka was retained under the capable management of Caverhill.

Establishing Flaxbourne was a comparatively easy task. There were occasional moments of hardship, such as those experienced when overlanding the 2,000 New South Wales sheep from Port Underwood in Cloudy Bay to Flaxbourne, but nothing like the 'days of starvation' at Wharekaka. Living quarters too were completely different. This time Weld determined to have his house comfortable and warm and he chose a site with care. He intended to have a garden and vineyard in a narrow valley which lay behind the house and wrote enthusiastically of a clear brook running through the glen, of a thirty-foot cascade shaded with hanging boughs. All that remains today is a stand of English trees. The waterfall has gone and the grassed hills are bare of bush.

In April 1848 Clifford sailed for England leaving Weld in charge of both stations. Shepherds gave more trouble than sheep. On returning from one exploration to the back of Flaxbourne, Weld discovered that careless hands had let a number of stock go astray. He dismissed the men immediately and began seeking the lost sheep.

37. 'Memoranda', 5 August - 18 September 1847.
38. Weld to Humphrey Weld, n.d. [postmarked 23 November 1847].
39. I am indebted to Mr T. Lowe of Ward, Marlborough for showing me the site of the original homestead; and to Mr & Mrs H.H. Vavasour of Ugbrooke near Blenheim and Mr & Mrs S. Scrope of Flaxbourne House, Great Ouseburn, York, England for their generous hospitality and the assistance which made possible my visit to Flaxbourne.
ranging the hills 'not like the picture in the Parables with crook & wallet' but with Lion and Scout at his heels and rifle and hunting knife by his side. But no longer did labour difficulties portend disaster. Weld at least knew how to cope with sheep by now.

As he looked around him Weld concluded that he was indeed perfectly comfortable. He had friends in the district to talk to, horses, dogs, a boat, two stations to visit, a nice house, eatables even luxuries in abundance and yet, as he confided to his favourite sister, he wished for home more than ever. 'Not that I should like always to live at home but ... I have an intense desire of seeing you again - of talking to somebody in whom I could confide - for whom I care and who cares for me who has in some measure the ideas tastes & wishes that I may have ....' With typical brotherly suspicion, Weld hastily disclaimed the inference he felt sure Apollonia would draw from this letter, but though Weld probably did not admit the feeling even to himself, Clifford's recent marriage had unsettled him.

Weld's single status was, if anything, an advantage during his first few years in New Zealand. It certainly had not bothered him and indeed, until Clifford's marriage, the whole idea of matrimony had possibly never entered Weld's head. His cousin's example probably jolted Weld into thinking much more about the subject himself and he would soon have realised just how limited the prospects were in New Zealand. Refined young Englishwomen, single and Catholic into the bargain, were a colonial rarity in the 1840s, and such young ladies as did come to the colony were hardly likely to venture beyond the boundaries of regular settlement. Weld's social contacts were

40. Weld to Apollonia Weld, 1 May 1848; Weld to Clifford, 1 June 1848, Clifford MSS.
41. Weld to Apollonia Weld, 1 May 1848.
few but the feelings of intense personal loneliness, though very real, were as yet infrequent. He wanted to be well and truly established before permitting his scheming sister to look out for a suitable wife.

In 1846 wool became Wellington's chief export. Its value rose steadily as an increasing number of colonists, disregarding the Wakefieldian principles of intensive agriculture and concentrated settlement, turned to sheep farming for a viable form of economic activity. Company officials were upset less by the disregard of principle than by the consequent loss of revenue, for the squatters' method of direct negotiation with the Maoris deprived the New Zealand Company of profits anticipated from the sale of land at a 'sufficient price'.

The squatters meanwhile had worries of their own. Land tenure was extremely precarious. The pioneer pastoralists had no guarantee against breaches of agreement or sudden eviction at the whim of the Maori owners, nor any legal defence against European encroachment on their runs. The whole system of Maori leases was in open defiance of the 1846 Native Land Purchase Ordinance which rendered such informal arrangements illegal. To the squatters the risks seemed worthwhile; to Governor Grey the situation was dangerous.

It was clear to Grey that the squatters' conduct would bring the authority of the British Government further into disrepute in Maori eyes. It could also mean serious disturbance arising from genuine misunderstanding or deliberate cheating by either or both of the parties concerned. There was too a distinct possibility that the Maoris would derive so much revenue from the leasing of their lands that they could become loath to sell and to part with it forever. Nor did the idea of the Maoris obtaining easy wealth in this way fit in with
Grey's notion of bringing the native New Zealander to a higher state of civilisation along the road of hard work and just reward.

The only way of solving the pastoral problem was to enable sheep farmers to buy or lease land directly from the Crown on liberal terms, but no such remedy could be effected while the New Zealand Company retained its interest in the colony. In the southern settlements, where the squatting problem was most acute, Grey's first task was to put the Company in possession of the 1,300,000 acres agreed to by the British Government. As long as Company authority and Company ideas of £1 per acre as a sufficient price for rural land prevailed in New Munster, Grey's plans were hindered. Not until the Company surrendered its charter in July 1850 was the Governor's way clear to implementing a scheme of pastoral tenure which he saw as appropriate to New Zealand conditions.

Although there is only scant reference in Weld's surviving correspondence it is certain that he heartily approved Grey's efforts to order the pastoral situation, especially once the New Zealand Company agents began devising their own methods to exact some form of payment from the squatters. As early as January 1847 it appears that Grey, while desirous of finding a long term solution to the issue, was also planning some interim measure for regulating the illegal practice of native leaseholds in areas to which the Crown had no title. In the course of a 'highly satisfactory' interview with Clifford, Grey outlined proposals whereby the squatters should hold their runs by paying a fair annual rental or tax on stock to the rightful native owners (to be determined by a government-appointed commission).

42. See Rutherford, pp.182-4.
The squatters would then be secured in possession of their runs by the Government for at least two years, after which time parts of the run might be put up for auction at £1 per acre. Weld felt the details of the measure were excellent. Justice was done to Maori and squatter alike without interfering in the slightest with systematic colonisation or with the acquisition of land for agriculture at a fixed price. But Grey returned suddenly to Auckland and was obliged to leave the squatting interests in the confusion in which he had found them.

Clifford and Weld had good reason to wish for Grey's intervention. At Wharekaka the Maori leasehold system had worked very much to their advantage: not so at Flaxbourne. The extensive acreage which the partners had leased from Puaha was right in the middle of the three million acre Wairau block which the Ngatitoa had sold to Grey in March 1847 and which the Governor had subsequently handed over to the New Zealand Company. The Maoris having relinquished their title, Clifford and Weld were faced with the prospect of negotiating some new arrangement with the Nelson agent of the Company, a task which, not surprisingly, they avoided for as long as possible. But Flaxbourne came under fire as initial surveys of the relatively inaccessible Wairau block focussed on the river valleys, and in June 1848 Weld was informing Clifford that their hold on the Blind River boundary was precarious since most of the sections there had been purchased.

43. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 9 January 1847, Weld Papers, I, No. 4. The Australasian Land Sales Act of 1842 had permitted annual pastoral licences to be issued upon payment of a small fee. Imperial Orders-in-Council in 1847 created pastoral leases of fourteen year duration, a precedent which was to be acted upon with the Crown Lands Amendment and Extension Ordinance of 1851. See J.B. Condliffe, New Zealand in the Making, 2nd ed., London, 1959, p.114.

44. Weld to Clifford, 1 June 1848.
Although the squatting situation remained unsatisfactory, by December 1847 Grey had resolved all the outstanding land disputes in Wellington and the Hutt. Weld was one who benefited from the Governor's achievement, for in July 1848 his town and country land was sold at a good price. With deposits, rents and interest Weld calculated he should receive £700 for the properties. This sum wiped out the capital debt he owed Clifford, saved him a heavy burden of interest and, of greatest importance, brought the trip home nearer to realisation. If only New Zealand were within a few days' sail of England, Weld bemoaned, he should be perfectly happy and settled; 'but as it is be sure that my affections for home and you grow stronger & stronger with absence & I never look upon N Zealand otherwise than as a kind of limbo'.

By September Weld had sufficient confidence in his employees at Flaxbourne to leave the station for some weeks in order to visit Wharekaka. It was at least six months since he had been in the Wairarapa and Weld was impressed with what he found. The natives were behaving very well, he thought, and were daily improving, dressed in smart blankets, shirts and trousers, many of them riding good horses and eating wheaten cakes; 'they are hardly recognizable externally for the same filthy half-starved quarrelsome wretches that they were four less than four years ago'.

No less remarkable in Weld's view was the change in the appearance of the valley and in their own situation at Wharekaka. No longer were they in 'hourly uncertainty as to the continuation of the friendly disposition of the natives with individuals of whom we were constantly obliged to differ & occasionally use our fists to maintain

45. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 1 July 1848, Weld Papers, I, No. 7.
our rights & the respect due to us'. Now the Wairarapa contained
dozens of good houses, fenced enclosures, wheat fields, bridges and
drains; 'rude carts with wheels formed out of the circumference of a
tree are already to be seen sledges drawn by oxen or horses have
traversed the valley and on the river the smartly painted whaleboat
with its load of wool, or stores and its stout jolly rowers, already
rivals the long snake like canoe dark red & adorned with plumes &
curious carving, whose swarthy paddlers made the forest echo with
their yelling boat song'.

Caverhill's management of Wharekaka was clearly to Weld's
satisfaction and with no difficulties to sort out, Weld was soon able
to return to Port Nicholson en route to Flaxbourne. It was during this
stopover in Wellington that Weld made what was to him significant
personal contact with the Greys. Previously he had viewed them
from a distance and while his favourable impressions of the Governor
were reinforced, Weld found that he had to change his opinion of the
Governor's wife. He had thought Lady Grey proud but as a formal
morning visit lengthened beyond the limit of a dozen such encounters,
Weld was surprised to find her a most delightful person. Family links
obviously helped. Weld discovered that Lady Grey not only knew
Chideock and some of its old identities, but that Christina and Apollonia
had been amongst her childhood friends. Equally flattering to Weld
was the revelation that Sir George Grey had known one of his uncles

46. Weld to C.M.Weld, n.d. [postmarked 4 October 1848],
Weld MSS., No. 2. For a more detailed description of pastoral-
ism in the valley during this period see R.D.Hill, 'Pastoralism
in the Wairarapa', in R.F.Watters,(ed.) Land and Society in
New Zealand, Wellington, 1965, pp.25-45. See Appendix I
for details of stations and stock in the Wairarapa in 1847.
well: in Weld’s society such connections mattered. He was invited to dine.

I had a great deal of conversation ... on politics & was much pleased with his views which are exactly what I have always expressed in writing home - he is at daggers’ drawn with the landsharking 'church missionary' party & both he & his lady quite warm in their praises of our Catholic missionaries. He told me that owing to the misrepresentation made at home he had received orders to turn all the French priests out of the Island which orders he disobeyed - he says that our priests would have undoubtedly saved the settlement of the B of Islands had they been attended to before the attack by Heli two years ago - 'Persecution' was the term he applied to the conduct of the missionaries towards our priests & he spoke in no measured terms of their insidious and calumnious attacks upon his government made because he would not allow them to appropriate the immense tracts of land that they have so disgracefully attempted to claim - Indeed some of the information I derived from the Governor would make a good article in the Tablet were it not that it were derived from a private conversation which he might not like to be divulged and indeed it would perhaps injure him to make it public.47

In time even an ingenuous Frederick Weld was to learn caution in his appraisal of Governor Grey's private conversations.

During their discussion, Grey mentioned a scheme for instituting pastoral rights to Crown lands, the outline of which Weld thought excellent, far better than the Governor's original ideas. Weld gives no details, but the principal features were probably a reduction in the price of rural lands and the giving to leaseholders of Crown lands a pre-emptive right to purchase runs which they actually stocked, suggestions which Grey subsequently made to the Colonial Office in

47. Weld to C.M.Weld, n.d. [postmarked 4 October 1848]. Rutherford, pp.131–41 for Grey’s handling of the land affair; ibid., pp.95–98 for reference to the missionaries’ defence of FitzRoy’s policy, the allegations against Bishop Pompallier and his Catholic missionaries, and Grey’s attitude towards Henry Williams.
July 1849. 48

Back at Flaxbourne, Weld became concerned with interference on the boundaries as neighbouring squatters sought to extend their runs, and when in November 1848 Major Mathew Richmond visited the station, 49 Weld pressed the Superintendent to stay two nights, took him over as much of the run as he thought wise, and solicited Richmond's intervention with the New Zealand Company agent at Nelson. 50 His efforts were of no avail for in 1849 all squatters in the Nelson district had to apply for leases, giving the estimated square mileage of their runs; a description of boundaries, an estimate of carrying capacity and a statement of the number of stock to be raised. Runs were allocated on a first come first served basis and Clifford and Weld were granted a licence to depasture 78,000 acres. 51 Richmond's visit did

48. ibid., p.189.
49. Weld to Clifford, 13 November 1848, Clifford MSS.
50. Gaudin, p.32. F.Jollie was acting resident agent in Nelson for some months after Fox became principal agent upon the death of Colonel Wakefield.
51. Gaudin, pp.26,33. These terms were, in fact, far more liberal than either the New Zealand Company directors or some of the resident land purchasers in Nelson desired. Fox had drawn up these regulations in 1848 and they had been approved by Colonel Wakefield and were due to come into effect on 1 January 1849. The licences were issued for 18 months and applicants did not have to be resident land purchasers. Each grantee was required to place as many head of stock on the run as could be calculated to stock it fully at the end of five years. Fees were 1d per head of sheep, 8d per head for cattle and horses. The Company retained the right of pre-emption over the lands should they be required for rural settlement. Fox argued that there was no chance of a squatting problem arising similar to that in New South Wales as long as the principle was upheld that no pastoralist should occupy more land than he could use within the period for which the licence had been granted. Ruth Allan, Nelson, A History of Early Settlement, Wellington, 1965, p.389.
have an unexpected side effect however. Weld was put on the list of local JP's; 'the discernment of our worthy Suptd of the S Div could not let so bright a jewel as myself sleep in obscurity'.

While not altogether pleased with the licencing, Weld was relieved to have the tenure of Flaxbourne settled since in December 1848 tragedy had struck at Wharekaka. Weld had been at the station during shearing and had just reached Wellington when he was informed of Caverhill's death by drowning. The news was a great blow to Clifford and Weld, both of whom had held Caverhill in high personal regard. For Weld, Caverhill's death marked the beginning of a hectic year. He returned to the Wairarapa, coming down to Port Nicholson in time to sail across in the *Fly* with Grey and Dillon Bell to Queen Charlotte Sound where he witnessed Grey's acquisition of the 7000 acre Waltohi block, 'a work of very few minutes', which guaranteed the Wairau settlers secure access to the coast. He reached Flaxbourne on 3 January to find shearing in progress, went back to Wharekaka, but was in Nelson at the end of the month to see Bell about persistent interference on the South Island run. Home to Flaxbourne for a few days; over to Wellington for a week engaged in business relating to the stations; in March on his way to Wharekaka via the new road over the Rimutakas. On arrival Weld found the flock badly infected with scab, the preventative dipping having been washed out by heavy rains.

52. Weld to Clifford, 28 November 1848, Clifford MSS.
53. 'Memoranda', 17 December 1848.
54. Weld to *Christina/Apollonia* 7 Weld, n.d. 7postmarked 15 January 18497, Weld Papers, I, No. 8.
55. 'Memoranda', entries for 1849.
It was months before Weld could leave. Bad weather and the shortage of reliable labour made the treatment of this highly contagious skin disease a slow process. As he informed Edward Stafford, a fellow pastoralist and exploration enthusiast: 'Far from thinking of Nelson or expeditions I have been sitting on the bathing stool cursing Warekaka & sighing for Flaxbourne, indeed my tobacco pipe has - in the beautiful words of Scott, been my "sole remaining joy"'. But with Stafford's letter had come a prospective manager who appeared to know most of the business and Weld was in high hopes of being able to leave 'this infernal place' within a week. 'I shall proceed at once to Nelson unless on my arrival at Wellington I hear that the vessel is wrecked or Flaxbourne gone to the dogs or something else equally pleasant and unforeseen should pack me off in some other direction for at present the fates appear bent on kicking me about as the whalers phrase it like a "pair of old boots".'

Weld's premonition was justified. He was stranded temporarily in Port Nicholson when his boat ran aground on one of the bars 'that so frequently adorn our New Zealand harbours', forcing him to forego his visit to Nelson and to make straight for Flaxbourne. But being detained in Wellington was to have its advantages.

Five years had now passed since Weld's first foray into the Wairarapa valley, five years during which his style of life and future prospects had undergone a virtual transformation - and all because of sheep. No other colonial activity could have wrought such a change.

56. Weld to Stafford, 15 June 1849, Stafford MSS., F.47, No.1, AT. The quotation is from Sir Walter Scott's poem, 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel'.

57. Weld to Stafford, 11 August 1849, Stafford MSS., F.47, No.2.
and given this unlikely pioneer a financial and personal security far beyond his original expectations. For what were those expectations: to make good, to establish himself, to do well, to prove himself? How could these intangibles accord with the realities of a New Zealand colonial environment?

With a vagueness and optimism shared perhaps by most of the early Wakefieldian arrivals, Weld had come to the colony with the unconscious assumption that a new land, by virtue of its being new, was a land of unlimited opportunity. And so it was. But it was a fallacy to assume that its opportunities were ready and waiting for the asking. New Zealand demanded a great deal from its first pioneers; each would have to draw heavily upon his own resources if he were to realise his dream, and while steerage class passengers had little other than reserves of hope, determination and physical strength, cabin class colonists had the overwhelming advantage of capital. Some wasted this precious resource by rash speculation within the settlements: those who wisely invested in sheep invested well for pastoralism was the only viable and secure form of large-scale economic activity in the southern settlements in the 1840s.

Without Clifford's financial assistance Weld would certainly have been in serious difficulties, as were less fortunate colonists who were forced to rely on a Company in no state to honour its promises of land, employment and relief. But even though Clifford would have helped his cousin simply from a sense of familial obligation, it was Weld's own reaction to colonial life which ensured a continuance of a fairly generous support.

In responding as he did to the exigencies of pioneering Weld probably surprised even himself, yet any adaptation at this stage was
essentially limited and, since Weld was no extraordinary individual, the pattern of his reaction - of initial enthusiasm and excitement followed by increasing restlessness, frustration and discontent - might well have been typical of many of his contemporaries. In one sense then the possession of capital was almost a disadvantage for it delayed rather than accelerated any incipient spiritual adaptation to New Zealand. Weld and others like him had come to the antipodes with the declared intention of going Home as soon as fortune would permit. Not until that first return visit would they really become reconciled to a colonial way of life for only then would they recognise and accept that theirs must be a dual allegiance. England would always be their spiritual home but their material well-being demanded their return to the colony, though even then, as now, for some the advantages of a new way of life were no compensation for the loss of the old.

By 1849 Clifford and Weld were widely recognised as two of New Zealand's leading pastoralists, and just as the problems of their foundation years were those experienced by most of the pioneer squatters, so the nature of their established partnership probably paralleled those of many of their contemporaries. Clifford personified the arm-chair squatter, the principal investor and businessman, supervising the purchase of the stock, the consignment of supplies, the disposal of the clip; Weld's role was increasingly that of a manager, moving from station to station as the need arose, able nevertheless to turn his hand to any part of the work as occasion demanded.

English capital, Australian stock, Scottish skill and the New Zealand environment had been essential components of success: these combined with Clifford acumen, Weld enthusiasm and Maori
goodwill had placed the pioneer pastoral ventures of Wharekaka and Flaxbourne on a sound and prosperous footing. Ignorance and disease no longer posed the major threats to their existence. Now the problem was one of consolidation as an increasing number of colonists and speculators on both sides of the Tasman looked to sheep farming in New Zealand as a lucrative source of investment. The anxiety with which Clifford and Weld viewed first Company then Government efforts to regularise pastoral tenure was shared by the squattocracy at large.

As in the Australian colonies, many of those with a vested interest in pastoral regulation soon developed a much wider concern for their political situation, and became involved with the question of settler participation in the running of colonial affairs. In New South Wales and Victoria the social and economic dominance of the early squatters ensured their pre-eminence in the first colonial legislatures. The same was to be true of New Zealand. And in their new role as politicians, Weld and his contemporaries were to be strongly influenced by the experiences of their own pioneering days, above all when dealing with native affairs.
CHAPTER IV

PASTORALISM AND POLITICS: 1849-51

Frederick Weld had come to New Zealand with an Englishman's regards for his rights and an English Catholic's suspicion of privilege but, judging from the range of books in his possession, he came without an overriding passion for politics. Religious works and English verse - Cowper, Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Goldsmith, Spenser, Byron, Gray - dominated his collection; books on gardening, fishing, farming, surveying, chemistry, zoology and law added some diversity, as did the Edinburgh Review, Don Quixote and Rob Roy. This handsome, blue-eyed aristocrat with his long brown curling hair, preferred reading poetry to political tracts yet, as events were to show, his initial lack of interest in politics was not a deep-rooted aversion. As with the subject of matrimony perhaps, once aware of the possibilities, Weld became an ardent champion of the cause: a catalyst was all that was needed.

The development of Weld's political consciousness to the point of active involvement took some years. The demands of his pastoral activities excluded him from the continual argument and discussion which surrounded the growth of organised political action in Port Nicholson and other Company settlements, but another factor was also important. It simply did not occur to Weld at first to see himself as one of the better educated and more established colonists upon whom leadership of political agitation necessarily devolved. Just as the incompetent Robert FitzRoy unwittingly aroused Weld's

political consciousness, so the equally inept Lieutenant-Governor Edward Eyre inadvertently brought Weld to a recognition of the political responsibilities of his position.

It was not simply FitzRoy's native policy which infuriated Weld. The Governor's general handling of colonial affairs seemed totally chaotic. Weld began to fume at the colonists' complete powerlessness to influence the authority to which they were subjected. The decisiveness with which George Grey acted restored Weld's faith in the efficacy of British rule, a response which was not atypical. However, Grey's resolution aggravated the southern settlers' discontent with New Zealand Company mismanagement. When rumours of the directors' bid for a proprietary government reached Port Nicholson, public reaction according to Weld was fierce; 'people all idolize Grey & the public hate against the Company is at boiling point'.

The Company failed to obtain the desired authority but the attempt had important repercussions. The directors demanded that representative institutions be granted New Zealand in order to make the colony more attractive to colonists and investors alike and the Peel Ministry, in need of extra votes from Company supporters in the Commons, acceded to the request. Though Peel was subsequently defeated, the draft constitution bill was adopted by the Russell Government. In 1846 the New Zealand Constitution Act was passed, 'a curious by-product of political pressures in England, not the result either of colonial demands or of any careful and informed analysis of the colony's needs'.

2. e.g. Weld Journal 1844-6, 26 March 1845; Weld to Humphrey Weld, n.d. / postmarked 17 September 1845.7.
3. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 9 January 1847.
It was George Grey, a firm believer in the principle of representative government, who managed to delay its untimely application in New Zealand. On hearing the news Weld was prepared to concede that the colonists still had some cause to be thankful to their benevolent despot.

Our new constitution has been burked by Governor Grey who represented to the Home Government that the natives would not submit to a government in which they had no part - a very frivolous subterfuge - for they have now no part in his absolute Government - whereas in a representative one they would be admitted to a share of the Government as soon as they were sufficiently civilized to be able to vote - at present they would not prefer one kind of Government to another - a more sensible reason would be that Grey feared he would be hampered by factious opposition at all events in the South - & moreover I think him naturally fond of unlimited power. Be that as it may his general conduct has been good & we have reason to felicitate ourselves upon his reign. Long live King Grey Autocrat of all New Zealand. 5

In Port Nicholson however intense indignation was aroused by the publication of despatches in which Grey had argued against parts of the constitution, and by news of the British Government's Suspending Act. In December 1848 the Wellington Settlers' Constitutional Association was founded. 6

The principal support for the Association came from leading landowners, merchants and professional men and Weld, largely through his connection with Clifford, was included amongst the more prominent members. Weld's advocacy of the principle of representative government stemmed from a genuine sense of

5. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 1 July 1848.
conviction but the nature of his subsequent political activity was influenced by two considerations. During Clifford's absence and particularly after Caverhill's death, station affairs demanded Weld's full attention; he simply could never spend sufficient time in Wellington to become deeply involved in the political in-fighting which was to develop between nominees and 'factionists', those who accepted appointment to the Executive and Legislative Councils and their opponents. Weld's attitude towards Grey was also of importance. The personal respect and admiration with which he regarded the Governor tempered Weld's criticisms of his actions, for Weld felt he had achieved a meaningful level of personal contact with Grey. It is unlikely that the feeling was mutual, though Grey must have been well aware of the favourable impression he had made on the young colonist, only thirteen years his junior but an age distant in experience.

Yet respect and admiration did not mean subservience. On the very day that Weld heard of Caverhill's death Grey sent for him and in a 'very flattering manner' offered him a seat in the New Munster Legislative Council. Weld declined;

the said Council is merely 'a blind between Governor & Governed'. By its constitution its members are merely tools in the hands of the Governor - and also by accepting I conceived we should lessen our chances of soon obtaining those representative institutions which are admitted on all hands to be necessary. I shewed

7. e.g., Weld to Clifford, 27 March 1849, Clifford MSS.: 'I think he [Grey] is one of the most statesmanlike men I have ever known - he takes large and comprehensive views of subjects his political principles I like exceedingly & still more his philosophical ones. I should almost have fancied myself talking to an élève of old Fr. Freudenfeldts at Fribourg.'
His Excy that this was the most fitting moment to introduce them - a moment when no party or factious spirit exists but that if he thought otherwise better openly carry on the Government as before by himself - in fine we debated the subject for about two hours during which (he was hard up for gentlemen members as he himself said) he tried every mode of persuasion - but without avail - I laboured under great disadvantage in my not having been prepared beforehand but managed pretty well - another reason for my non acceptance was want of time. 8

The decision proved wise. The nominees were scorned and abused by their fellow colonists, so much so that Weld began to fear public interests were being ignored. He attended the Grand Reform Banquet held in Port Nicholson on 1 March 1849 as a demonstration in favour of the immediate establishment of representative institutions; after it he was convinced that even Clifford, who knew Wellington so well, could not appreciate the narrow spirit of cavil and rancour which prevailed in the settlement. Weld remained relatively detached - and prided himself on his disinterest. 'Preserving of course my opinions as decided as ever I am glad to say that I have quarrelled with nobody and dine with and meet daily the belligerents on either side though I do not entirely agree with the course pursued by either which of course I dont conceal. On the contrary we discuss the question every day which I was beginning to get tired of when I left. However it is amusing & interesting enough for a few days.' 9

Scab confined Weld to Wharekaka from March until August 1849 but political news filtered through to the Wairarapa. Feeling in Wellington was reputedly as strong as ever. Weld was surprised

8. 'Memoranda', c.17 December 1848. See below Chapter XVI, footnote 16.
9. Weld to Clifford, 27 March 1849. A somewhat trite political squib representing Weld's attempt to convey the intensity of local feeling is cited in Gaudin, p.64.
to learn how widespread were the expressions of dissatisfaction with the political situation: 'It shows that the old Saxon leaven is amongst us yet.' The nominees were still the derision of the mob and a butt for the arrows of the better class, he informed Stafford; 'and some of the said arrows appear to have hit the mark & told sharply enough too if we may judge from the extreme soreness of the Honourables who at best are not furnished with that armour of proof whereof Shakespeare speaks "Thrice is he armed etc".\footnote{10}

Whether nominated councils could have worked in the southern settlements remains a moot point but if Weld's reaction was typical, the councils were no substitute for the real measure of representative government of which the colonists felt Grey had deprived them. To establish such bodies in New Munster after the settlers knew that Grey had blocked the road to representation was simply asking for failure.\footnote{11}

The colonists' initial resentment was compounded by the calibre of the individuals concerned. Those who did accept nomination accomplished nothing to absolve their disgrace, while Lieutenant-Governor Edward Eyre's attempts to direct affairs angered the settlers even more. Eyre had made an unfavourable impact on the colonists in Port Nicholson from the very moment of his arrival on 7 August 1847 and his subsequent behaviour did

\footnote{10. Weld to Stafford, 15 June 1849. 'Thrice is he arm'd that hath his quarrel just, And he but naked, though lock'd up in steel, Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted. King Henry VI, Part II, III, ii, 232.}

\footnote{11. See Rutherford, pp.158-9.}
nothing to rectify the position. 12 Weld was distinctly unimpressed with Eyre's performance. He regarded him as a fool whose actions were absurdities worthy of the hitherto 'incomparable' FitzRoy. 13 Eyre's apparent irresponsibility and the ineffectiveness of the nominees did as much to strengthen Weld's determination to obtain representative institutions as did any action of Governor Grey.

Weld's enforced stay in Wellington in August 1849 coincided with a burst of activity from the Constitutional Association. More of Grey's delaying despatches had been published and at a public meeting held to draw up an indignant protest, Weld moved the petition's tenth resolution: 'That the advantages proposed by Sir George Grey to be derived from the four years' acquaintance with the practice of legislation which he imagines his Nominee Council will have before Representative Institutions are conceded, are entirely fallacious.' Weld pointed out that since none of the nominees would ever be returned by any of the settlers in an open election the fruits of their experience - if any - would be lost completely. He was inclined to think that this would hardly matter.

12. McLintock, pp.216-21 gives an idea of Eyre's difficulties which the Lieutenant-Governor himself aggravated; also Rutherford, pp.156-7, 160-1. G. Dutton, The Hero as Murderer, London, 1967, endeavours to salvage something of Eyre's reputation. Alfred Domett, editor of the Nelson Examiner, once commented on Eyre's exploring activities: 'He won't break his neck I know, because no one cares enough for him. The devil breaks nobody's neck but where he has a chance of breaking somebody's else's heart in the same effort .... So Eyre is safe enough.' Domett to Stafford, 8 November 1849, Stafford MSS., F.32, No.1.

13. Weld to C.M. Weld, n.d. [postmarked 4 October 1848].
'Men never learn to do the work of freemen by wearing the despot's livery.' The colonists would learn from their own experience, not from contemplating the acts nor from joining the deliberations of the councils, and if additional proof of the position was required, it was to be found in the 'fruitlessness' of the Legislative Council's latest session 'when the lame attempts at legislation, the want of intelligence and total absence of independence displayed, drew down the contempt and laughter of the whole community'.

Eyre's incompetence continued to exasperate Weld beyond measure but it was a religious issue which proved to be the last straw. The Lieutenant-Governor had previously earned Weld's censure for taking up the cudgels 'in his usual insolent & sneering tone' on behalf of William Colenso, Anglican missionary at Ahuriri. Colenso had opposed the Maoris working on the Wairarapa road and Weld for one was intensely irritated at the missionary's ' meddling with secular affairs'. Eyre's defence of Colenso aroused Weld's suspicions that the government officer was out to gain religious support. Subsequent events seemed to confirm this.

You will hardly believe that one of the latest acts of Eyre... (whilst the expenditure is some thousands in excess of the revenue) has been to appoint a 'Colonial Chaplain' an excuse to give a Church of England parson £1200 a year out of our pockets in a country where no State church is acknowledged - the only reason of this that I can see is to gain the support of the Anglican clergy to his very unpopular Government and so it is with half a dozen other appointments - and this in a

14. cit. Lovat, p. 85; NE, 6 October 1849, pp. 122d, 123a-d, 214a-c /i.e. pp. 126-8. The page numbers in the actual issue are neither consecutive nor accurate./

country in want of loads of schools of native hospitals of lighthouses & with a deficient revenue; and we the settlers have no recognized mode of endeavouring to stop this system of profligacy and waste though taxed at the rate of £2.10 a head on the whole European population men women & children by the arbitrary /sic/ authority of a Governor & a council composed entirely of members appointed by him.

Weld was furious. Political agitation would not cease, he declared, 'and as the waste of our own public money & that voted to the Colony by Parliament still continues we trust that as it becomes known in England we shall obtain those powers of self-government that all Englishmen have except those who devote themselves to adding to and strengthening the Colonial Empire of Great Britain'.

Failing to realise that their fight against Grey was unnecessary (for the Governor was not opposed in principle to constitutional change) politically-minded settlers were not prepared to rest content with petitions which could so easily be ignored at the Colonial Office. More direct pressure had to be exerted in London and there the colonists' cause was aided by two developments. The formation of the Canterbury Association in March 1848 brought together an impressive group of parliamentarians, churchmen and aristocrats, a body of men who could command a great deal of official attention and who, because of their planned settlement in New Zealand, were keeping a close eye on events in the colony. Secondly, the tide was running in favour of political reform. In 1847 Earl Grey, Secretary of State for Colonies, was prepared to concede

responsible government to Canada and, as domestic issues became less contentious, more parliamentary attention was given to colonial affairs. From this background grew the Society for the Reform of Colonial Government, a society which originated in the plans of E.G. Wakefield, Charles Adderley and John Robert Godley to launch a parliamentary campaign against Earl Grey, but which came to include members from all political parties who were united in the common objective of securing for colonial Englishmen their proper political rights. 17

An important link between the colonial and London-based agitators was provided by settlers home from New Zealand on business or personal visits. Charles Clifford was one such mediator. Though his return in April 1848 was prompted essentially by the need to settle his own financial affairs and to secure more capital for the pastoral venture, Clifford had also been directed by fellow colonists in Port Nicholson to act as their agent. In particular he was to ascertain official views on the possibility of constitutional reform. At first he made little headway. Then association with E.G. Wakefield led to involvement with the Colonial Reformers, 18 and by the time

17. For a general account of the Colonial Reformers and their work see Morrell, passim; Chapter XIX relates particularly to the Society for the Reform of Colonial Government. McLintock, pp. 302-4 analyses the connection between the Canterbury Association, the Society and the Wellington Association.

18. 'Clifford leaves me after long talks about N Zealand. He is better informed than any body here about that colony; and he is ready to work for it in concert with the Society. I strongly recommend that he be deemed its organ for the present.' E.G. Wakefield to J.E. FitzGerald, 13 July 1850, FitzGerald MSS., I, p.147, Du Ho.
he was ready to come back to New Zealand, Clifford was hopeful that news of the colonists' liberation from nomineism 'and such like snares & delusions' might reach the colony with him. Weld was less sanguine. He thought his cousin counted far too heavily on a parliamentary victory: 'I think that the votes of those who know little & care less about the Colonies and will give their voices to the Minister as a matter of course are sure to outnumber those of our supporters but all the argument & all the talent will be on our side.'

The ideas of the Colonial Reformers were conveyed to the Wellington Settlers' Constitutional Association some months before Clifford returned in November 1850. John Robert Godley, having left England in December 1849 in his capacity as resident chief agent for the Canterbury Association, spent his first eight months in the colony in Port Nicholson. During this time Godley's forthright comment greatly influenced the direction of argument put forward by the Constitutional Association, of which body he became a member in August 1850.

19. Weld to Stafford, 7 May 1850, Stafford MSS., F.47, No.4.
20. McLintock, pp.308-10. C.E.Carrington, John Robert Godley of Canterbury, Christchurch, 1950, is a useful source for information on Godley's activities; J.E.PitzGerald, (ed.) A Selection from the Writings and Speeches of John Robert Godley, Christchurch, 1863, for a collection of Godley's speeches and writings. Godley was particularly influential in his criticisms of Grey's draft Provincial Councils' Ordinance which the Governor laid before the General Legislative Council in Wellington in October 1850. It was largely Godley's inspiration which turned members of the Constitutional Associations to the task of drawing up their own constitutional proposals and forwarding them to London. See Rutherford, pp.240-2.
Weld met the Godleys soon after their arrival in the settlement — though not before the inimitable Charlotte was acquainted with his reputation. "There is a Mr Weld here, one of the great Roman Catholic family of that name in England and we hear a "very nice young man," who retains civilization in the middle of a bush-life, and started with a good capital. He expects, next year, to have 20,000 sheep and to make on them £8,000; £2,000 of which will pay the expenses of his sheep stations, shepherds etc., leaving him £6,000 clear profit. At present he has not so large a flock, or proportionate return, as the expenses are comparatively much greater on a small flock." Their meeting a few days later went off well, despite Charlotte's learning that Weld was only a partner holding the smaller share. "First came, of course, a discourse on sheep, and colonial matters in general; and then we got to books, of which he seems passionately fond; we were able to lend him all Tennyson and Ruskin, whom he knew only in reviews, and he went off very happy with that." 21

Clifford's return relieved Weld of some of the administrative burdens of their joint affairs and enabled him to accompany the Godleys to Port Cooper where he helped initiate them into the techniques of camping out. Charlotte was impressed and grateful for the aid, and when on 6 December Weld took his leave of the party to begin his overland journey to Flaxbourne, the Godleys were sorry to see him go. "We like Mr Weld so much ... and he is so good-natured that at last I asked him to call on you, and tell you all about us ... and if he does come pray seem as if you

expected him, for he is very shy, and it is an exertion to him to go to new people, though I am quite certain you would all like him.  

Weld was excited at the prospect of his trip home, now within weeks of realisation. He was to leave the colony in February 1851 and would not return until December 1852, a month prior to the Godleys' departure for England. Whatever influence Godley's ideas had on Weld's political thinking then - and it seems to have been considerable - it was exerted less by direct personal contact and spasmodic correspondence than by Weld's later association with Godley's political disciples, C.C. Bowen and J.E. Fitzgerald in particular, friendships which developed as Weld, by a happy combination of inclination and necessity, came to spend more time in Canterbury.

One aspect of his pioneering life Weld enjoyed above all others, the opportunities it provided for exploration. During his first few years at Wharekaka he had obtained an extensive knowledge of the Wairarapa Valley and its coastal environs as far as Castle Point. With Vavasour he is also reputed to have ventured along the coast between Wellington and New Plymouth, astonishing the Taranaki settlers with a successful penetration of Egmont's bush between what is now Hawera and New Plymouth. Sheep troubles prevented Weld from joining Edward Stafford in explorations of the Nelson district in the late 1840s, but the Lyttelton to


23. H.H. Vavasour, 'Pioneers: and How They Fared', reprinted from the *Dominion*, 30 September 1911. Mr H.H. Vavasour of Ugbrooke kindly provided this reference.
Flaxbourne trek in December 1849 was the forerunner of several important trips in the South Island. It also opened the way to the founding of a new station.

Although business returns for Wharekaka and Flaxbourne are non-existent for these early years, it is clear from scattered references that the pastoral venture was making a handsome profit. Rams of the firm’s own breeding were fetching twenty guineas in December 1849, ten month old lambs were selling at three guineas, and even Stafford, their rival breeder, was advising people to buy Clifford and Weld stock. In December 1849 Weld also recorded shearing 5-6lb fleeces from the Merinos and the 1849-50 season average was $4\frac{1}{2}$ lb per head, a total which, according to William Fox, surpassed New South Wales tallies by a considerable margin. But Charlotte Godley’s informant had exaggerated stock numbers. The depleted Wharekaka flock numbered 2863 sheep in October 1848; in January 1850 there were 7681 weaned sheep at Flaxbourne; and in March Weld wrote of 11,000 sheep on the ground, a total which referred to Flaxbourne alone.


25. Weld to Humphrey Weld, 12 December 1849.

26. loc.cit.; W. Fox to C.A. Dillon, 8 February 1850, Dillon MSS., AT. In 1851, Weld put the New South Wales average at 2$\frac{1}{2}$ lbs of wool per head of sheep. See Hints to Intending Sheep Farmers in New Zealand, London, 1851, p.2. For some idea of Australian figures, A. Barnard, The Australian Wool Market 1840-1900, Melbourne, 1958, p.15, footnote 22.

Labour and scab were still the worst problems. In March 1849 Weld reported gloomily to Clifford that men's wages were rising higher and higher while trustworthy employees were at a premium. By 1850 he was a little more cheerful, having discovered that by giving slightly higher wages he had in fact effected a comparative reduction in the number of men while obtaining more work more efficiently performed. Scab proved more difficult to manage. Once one or two animals were infected the whole flock had to be treated and kept under close surveillance, an expensive process in terms of time and labour. It seemed to Weld that he no sooner got the flock at one station clean than the other would be infected: 'Indeed I have quite given up proposing according to the old adage man proposes & God disposes - where sic it not for fear of irreverence (our destiny being so dependent on that instrument of providence scab in this country) I should say man proposes & scab disposes - at all events so it often happens with me.'

In December 1850 the partners decided to establish their second South Island run. The obvious success of Flaxbourne,

---

28. Weld to Clifford, 27 March 1849; Flaxbourne Flock Returns January 1850, 'Remarks on men'. Department of Economics, Auckland University College, Statistics of New Zealand for the Crown Colony Period; 1840-1852, Auckland, 1954 is a valuable guide to average costs in this period. See Table 58, 'Average Prices of Livestock by Main Settlements; 1847-52', pp.85-87, prices for Wellington and Nelson in particular; Table 63, 'Average Wage Rates in Main Settlements; 1847-52', p.100 for Wellington and Nelson figures. Tables 60,61, pp.94,97 give average retail prices of selected commodities in Wellington and Nelson for the same years.

29. Weld to Stafford, 7 May 1850.
the geographical difficulty of keeping a satisfactory watch on Wharekaka, Clifford's acquisition of more family finance, and Weld's discovery of a suitable site during the Lyttelton to Flaxbourne journey all contributed to the decision. Doubtless there were other considerations. The system of direct leasing from the Maoris was clearly shortlived in the Wairarapa, while the area between the Motunau and Hurunui rivers with which Weld was so impressed was sufficiently close to the Canterbury settlement to enable the partners to supply both fresh meat to a new market and stock to any intending pastoralists in the Canterbury block. On Boxing Day 1850 Clifford and Weld applied for a licence to depasture sheep on the station to be known as Stonyhurst.

This time the task of establishment devolved upon Charles Clifford and his younger brother Alphonso who had also come out in November. Weld mapped what he thought was a suitable route by which sheep could be overlanded from Flaxbourne to Stonyhurst.

30. Gaudin, p.28.

31. Weld to Clifford, n.d. shows Weld's belief that the Maoris would soon sell the valley to the Government. It was not until 1853, however, that the Wairarapa purchase was completed. Rutherford, pp.184-5.


33. Weld Journal 1850, 'Trip from Flaxbourne, up Awatere, over pass into Clarence, over pass into Northern Part of Canterbury and Return', 20 December - 31 December 1850, Weld Papers, IV; LT, 8 March 1851, pp.6c, 7a-c. The original map is in the possession of Mr J.B. Douglas-Clifford of Stonyhurst. Weld's error lay in confusing the Acheron for the Clarence. Allan, pp.425-6.
but Alphonso's attempt to follow the directions failed. Weld had confused two rivers, an error which his cousin was far too inexperienced to realise, and he abandoned 730 sheep within what was a very short distance from Stonyhurst. Charles Clifford was furious. Weld had obviously been misled by a mirage or something, he complained to Stafford, and to Weld himself: 'That it should be a Clifford! But then the Kaikouras are so barbarous, and everyone about so stupid, and your maps, I must own, my dear Weld, so inaccurate.'

But Weld was past caring. He was home, crazy with joy at being in the company of those whom he had missed so much during the past seven and a half years. It is a pity that there are no records of the family's impressions of Weld at this time for, although he was unchanged in many respects, seven years in the antipodes had left their mark. Weld's warm affection for his family, the transparent honesty, naive even, which was to make him such a bad judge of fellow men - these were traits of character which never altered. But in New Zealand Weld had been thrown into a much wider social circle than would ever have been his experience in the cloistered environment of Chideock, and although he was still reserved in the company of strangers, and still fiercely intolerant on religious matters, seven years' independence had brought some measure of self-assurance and maturity.

The pamphlet which Weld compiled during his first trip home

35. Clifford to Stafford, 12 May 1851, Stafford MSS., P.31, No.1.
reflects this new-found confidence. Although Weld’s principal intention was to give aspiring pastoralists some idea of what they could expect to find and do in the colony, Hints to Intending Sheep Farmers in New Zealand is in many respects autobiography.

Weld drew on his own experience to give the beginner a plan of action. He included advice on factors to bear in mind when selecting a site, a summary of the relative advantages of Merinos over Leicester, Romney Marsh and Southdown rivals, and details on general flock management, all of which indicated that Weld as a sheep farmer had certainly come a long way since his first few months in the Wairarapa. The most significant part of the pamphlet however is that dealing with the financial and personal resources which Weld felt it essential for an aspiring pastoralist to possess.

To establish a sheep station on a secure footing, £1000–£1500 was required. For the requisite 800–1000 breeding ewes, a capital outlay of £750–£900 was needed on current prices; a further £300 was necessary for labour, improvements and as a reserve in case of ‘casualties or unforeseen contingencies’. Personally Weld felt that double that sum was the most favourable amount to invest initially since, he argued, on a good run 2000 sheep could be kept with but little more expense than 1000. More than £2500 he did not advise investing solely in sheep. For those with insufficient capital Weld recommended putting a smaller flock out on terms with a respectable sheep owner. Alternatively the intending sheep farmer might consider cattle breeding. This involved less risk and expense but also meant a lower return. Mixed farming Weld did not approve; horse breeding he considered currently far too speculative a venture in which to risk one’s entire capital. 38

38. Hints, pp.3-10.
Generally speaking, Weld assured his readers, the business of sheep farming in New Zealand was not beset with that mystery which enveloped the science of English stock farming. A very short apprenticeship would suffice to teach the rudiments of the art. The New Zealand stock owner did not have the same round of sales and purchases as his English counterpart; normally he effected sales through his town agent who conducted the mercantile part of the business. The colonial pastoralist himself usually lived at the station or passed his time between it and some settlement as inclination prompted or business called, but lest the intending sheep farmer should see himself as a leisurely country squire, Weld had a few words of caution which, for all their ponderous expression, reflected genuine conviction as to the role of the owner.

I consider it, however, almost essential that he should be at the station at the most busy periods of the year; that its formation, for instance, should be conducted by himself in person. It is well known that the eye of the master has great and magical power, especially if in arduous or difficult circumstances he sets the example to his men. In those cases of difficulty which sometimes occur in the first commencement of undertakings of this kind, in perhaps a totally wild country, the master should share the privations of the men. If provisions run short, he should fare as they do, and be the first, gun in hand, to wade the swamp or pierce the forest to seek supplies. If dogs attack the flock, he should set the example of nightly watching on the hill top, to destroy the depredators. As occasion might offer, he should not think it a degradation, gentleman born though he might be, to heap fresh logs on the bush fire, to put on the soup pot, or to bake a damper in the ashes. All this or more he should not shrink from doing, until, as things become settled, with increasing flocks, and servants better known to him, he will find it more profitable to confine himself to superintendence alone.

Weld was far from advising all persons to come to New Zealand with the intention of engaging in pastoral pursuits for, he cautioned,
finance alone was not enough. A man needed resources within himself to be happy in a life which was often, in some degree, solitary.

He should be fond of all kinds of active exercises; walking, riding, boating, shooting, fishing. Above all, he should be of a studious turn, as sometimes his book and his dog may be his only companions. Such accomplishments as painting and music, far from being out of place in a bark or wooden hut, are invaluable there. At home they are agreeable recreations, but in the bush they are more; for in moments of gloom and despondency, of vain regrets for the past, or useless longings after the future, - the mind is often diverted and aroused from its morbid state by their cheerful and soothing influence.39

Small wonder that Weld had a reputation for being civilised; if only Gibbon Wakefield had envisaged his gentleman farmer in a pastoral setting, Frederick Weld would have come as near as any man to personifying that ideal.

Weld considered that he had given a fairly comprehensive sketch of what any potential pastoralist might expect to encounter - but for one point. He would not be acting fairly and openly Weld felt if he attempted to conceal that the arbitrary form of government under which New Zealand suffered was a serious discouragement to pastoral enterprise as indeed to every other mode of investment in that country.

A person must have lived in a colony to be able to appreciate the full extent to which political questions affect the practical man. In the Northern Island of New Zealand, where waste land for pasturage has been chiefly held on lease from the natives, the vacillating and makeshift policy of the government has so complicated the question, that it has become most difficult of

39. ibid., pp.11-12.
solution. In the Middle Island, the pastoralists have had equal reason to complain of arbitrary measures enacted in Broad-street instead of Downing-street. The government has now, by the dissolution of the New Zealand Company, everything in its own hands; and consequently not even the shadow of excuse can remain, if it should any longer delay establishing a systematic tenure of waste lands.

Such government intervention in itself would not be enough, however:

...even were this effected, the settler can have no guarantee that the next governor may not reverse every act of his predecessor, as is common (even in most vital and practical points) with these irresponsible governments. Whatever may happen, he knows that he has no constitutional mode of obtaining redress, or of influencing the proposed policy, however seriously it may affect his interests. Any man, though but slightly acquainted with the history of the successive rulers of New Zealand, need not go far for illustrations of the truth of this remark. Under these circumstances, I would not advise any intending flock master to enter upon a New Zealand career, (unless as a mere speculation), were I not aware that the pastoral interest is now growing so powerful in the country - that its welfare is so intimately connected with the interests of every section of the community, and its demands so moderate and just - that I believe that the government, which has neglected it in its infancy, cannot now continue to refuse to listen to its demands. Yet I must add, that though I hope much from the policy of a governor, I hope more from the good sense and justice of the community, when the colony shall succeed in obtaining those political privileges for which it is struggling, and which are only denied to Englishmen when they happen to be engaged in what Lord Bacon calls the 'heroic work of colonisation.'

40. ibid., p.12.
CHAPTER V

INTO PARLIAMENT: 1852-4

In November 1851 Weld journeyed to Hams, Sir Charles Adderley's country seat in Staffordshire. For three days he joined William Fox, acting in England as political agent for the Wellington Settlers' Constitutional Association, Gibbon Wakefield, Adderley, and Henry Sewell, a member of the Canterbury Association soon to become prominent in colonial affairs, in 'concocting' a constitution for New Zealand. The draft, subsequently approved by W.E. Gladstone, Lord Lyttleton and the Duke of Newcastle, formed the basis of resolutions which Gladstone planned to introduce in the Commons if necessary. The Colonial Reformers were determined that the question of a representative constitution for New Zealand should be resolved during the forthcoming session of parliament.

Weld intended to go to London to help Fox in his 'beating up' for the parliamentary campaign but on 9 January tragedy struck when Humphrey Weld died suddenly of a heart attack. Weld was shattered. The pleasures of England palled and he contemplated shortening his stay, but the need to settle family affairs precluded any major change of plan. Weld's own pecuniary prospects were little affected by his father's death since he calculated that he would simply inherit sufficient to pay off his debt to Clifford.

1. Lovat, p.88.
2. Fox, p.9.
4. Weld to Clifford, 6 February 1852, Clifford MSS.
(This suggests that Weld had been obliged to borrow from his cousin in order to keep up his quarter share in Stonyhurst).}

Political news however was good; 'the Queen mentions NZ in her speech'!! The address from the throne at the opening of Parliament on 3 February 1852 indicated the intention of Lord John Russell's administration to give New Zealand colonists a measure of self-government, though no details were as yet available. Weld assured his cousin that there would be staunch opposition in London should any half-measures be proposed by what he regarded as the most effete and emasculated ministry ever to hold the reins of power: 'Get a free constitution we shall before very long of that there is no doubt & it is best now we have the steam up to be content with nothing half & half.'

Earl Grey was not in the event to introduce the measure which he had drafted largely in accordance with Governor Grey's advice. In February the Tories took office under Lord Derby, Sir John Pakington succeeding Earl Grey as Colonial Secretary. Pakington was disposed to postpone the constitutional issue for a year; under pressure from the Colonial Reformers and the colonists' representatives in London he changed his mind, and on 3 May a bill to grant New Zealand a representative constitution was introduced into the House of Commons.

Pakington proposed a unitary not a federal system of government. The six elected provincial councils were to be given considerable powers to deal with local affairs but were unmistakably subordinate to the General Assembly which comprised an elected House of

5. loc. cit.

6. W.E.Gladstone to J.E.FitzGerald, 18 June 1852, FitzGerald MSS., F.3, AT; Weld to Stafford, 12 January 1853, Stafford MSS., F.47, No.5; E.G.Wakefield to Godley, 7 June 1852 printed in LT, 30 October 1852, p.8a-c, p.9a-c; Fox, p.10.
Representatives and a nominated Legislative Council. The colonists were to receive liberal concessions, for example the control of waste lands, but were by no means afforded complete self-government. The Crown retained its right of pre-emptive purchase over Maori lands for instance; a civil list was to be reserved including £7000 for native affairs; and colonial legislators were effectively excluded from the direction of native policy. After a debate marked more by differences between the Colonial Reformers than by any Government–Opposition clash, the measure passed both Houses and royal assent was given on 30 June 1852.7

News of the Act reached the colony in late October and early November and aroused a mixed reaction. Opinions were divided as to the dominance of the General Assembly; there was widespread opposition to the nominated upper house; universal resentment greeted the arrangement whereby the New Zealand Company's debt was saddled on the colonial land revenue. But leading colonists were prepared to accept the measure as it stood believing (incorrectly) that it would be within their power to alter it once the Assembly convened.8

---


8. FitzGerald to H.S. Selfe, October 1852, Selfe MSS., I, No.37, Du Ho; McLintock, pp.353-6; Rutherford, pp.254-6.
Weld returned to New Zealand, gratified to find that his activities at Home had not passed unnoticed. 'Fully sensible' of the 'serious defects' in the bill, he felt that the colonists had gained a fair amount of 'actual & substantial power': 'it would have been madness not to accept it when the alternative was indefinite postponement of the question - with perhaps the Whigs again in power, and at all events the people here disheartened' worn out & divided or humbugged by Grey's new shew of liberality.'

Weld was clearly suspicious of Grey's intentions. Nobody in Wellington, he reported, doubted that this 'artful dodger'of Governors' would give trouble yet, and he shared the apprehension.

I had some hopes that Sir G would seeing the game was up have at least affected cordially to cooperate with the settlers in introducing the new measure especially as he has a sufficient outward shew of plausibility to enable him to claim the credit of the measure itself. But it appears that whilst claiming the credit (& laying the blame of the defects on us) he is only thinking of avoiding calling the general council together in which case he will try to amuse the people with the Provincial Councils for some months hoping that by that time he may be removed or something may turn up in his hand of cards. If the men of the provincial councils & the Superintendents are staunch he will find this a dangerous game.

Since the 1852 Constitution Act was largely the suggestion of Grey himself, it seems absurd that Weld and his contemporaries should have persisted in their belief that he was opposed to representative government for New Zealand. Yet in one respect their suspicions were justified. The form of constitution was not exactly as the Governor had recommended. Grey therefore determined to interpret the statute according to his own conception of

---

9. Weld to Stafford, 12 January 1853; see also Weld to Stafford 17 January /1853/, Stafford MSS., F.47, No.7.

10. Weld to Stafford, 12 January 1853.
what it should have been: a predominantly provincial system of government supervised by the Governor, the general legislature meeting infrequently as required. 11

Grey received his official copy of the Act late in December. On 12 January 1853 the Constitution was formally proclaimed; on 28 February the six provinces were defined; and a further proclamation one week later outlined the electoral districts, allocated members to the constituencies and made provision for the registration of electors and the conduct of elections. Writs for both provincial and general elections were issued by the middle of July and voters went to the polls in the various provinces between July and October 1853. 12

Weld stood for the Wairau. The idea had been first mooted in September 1852 when Clifford suggested to the prospective Superintendent of Nelson that Weld would make a 'capital member' for the General Assembly. Stafford agreed - 'I shall be honoured by being allowed to propose him as "a fit & proper person to represent so important a constituency etc etc"' - and Weld needed little persuasion. To his mind all who had taken part in working to upset the existing system were bound to endeavour to start the new one fairly; 'besides a great deal will depend upon the first council that meets'. 13 Weld was grateful for Stafford's encouragement and flattered to know that there were alternative openings in the Wairarapa and in Canterbury. There was also some talk of a

12. ibid., p.256; McLintock, pp.365-6.
13. Clifford to Stafford, 28 September 1852, Stafford MSS., F.31, No.4; Stafford to Clifford, 22 October 1852, Clifford MSS.; Weld to Stafford, 22 December 1852, Stafford MSS., F.47, No.19.
Wellington seat: 'However I shd much prefer Wairau - if I am to be in "at all".'

The modesty seems excessive. As pastoralist, explorer and political activist Weld was achieving considerable renown and already had earned himself the respect and support of some of the leading men in the south. Godley for instance, 'very anxious' that Weld and FitzGerald should become friends, wrote of him as 'by far the best man, take him for all in all', in the settlement. FitzGerald, an ebullient Irishman, was suitably impressed. On meeting Weld in January 1853 he commented, tongue in cheek; 'we did not think him an ass - he will come up here often'. Stafford commended Weld's integrity and gentleman-like feeling; I.E. Featherston, soon to be Superintendent of Wellington, felt it would be a great loss if Weld were not returned for the Wairau. Even Clifford, who was not a man given to high praise, thought it essential that such 'good, true & honest men' as his cousin be elected to the House of Representatives.

Even without this backing Weld's position would still have been assured. Throughout the colony provincial contests excited far more attention than elections for the General Assembly and Weld's first political campaign was, like many others in the colony, a mere formality. He went to Flaxbourne in May to bring in a quantity of wild cattle and to canvass the electorate.

15. J.E. Godley to FitzGerald, 3 January 1852, FitzGerald MSS., I, p.139, Du Ho; FitzGerald to Godley, n.d. d.c. February 1853, Kilbracken MSS., IV, p.388; Stafford to Clifford, 22 October 1852; Featherston to Stafford, 24 April 1853, Stafford MSS., F.33, No.3; ibid., Clifford to Stafford, 7 May 1853, F.31, No.6.
16. 'Which job he will find easier to succeed in remains to be seen.' Clifford to Stafford, 7 May 1853.
Stafford organised the requisite petition of electors entreatig Weld to offer his candidacy. Weld complied, and was elected unopposed on a 'platform' of opposition to the nominated upper house, rejection of the colonists' total liability for the New Zealand Company debt and support for the principle of religious equality.

That Weld had stood for the General Assembly but not, as Stafford had also suggested, for the Nelson Provincial Council, indicated his priorities. Like Godley, Weld declared his disapproval of 'undue centralisation'; however, he was by no means as ardent a champion of provincial autonomy as Featherston or Fox, and as months passed without any hint from Grey as to when the General Assembly would be summoned, Weld and other representatives became increasingly uneasy. By the end of 1853 petitions and memorials against Grey were being forwarded home in a manner reminiscent of the Constitutional Associations. Several factors contributed to this growing disquiet.

In March 1853 Grey had announced regulations whereby land not classed as agricultural could be sold at a fixed price of 10s per acre or auctioned at upset price of 5s per acre. Although the Canterbury and Otago blocks were specifically exempted, the new laws were a deliberate attack on the 'sufficient price' doctrine to which Grey had long been opposed. Welcomed in the north the regulations caused some discontent in the south where the Wakefieldian dogma still had its adherents. There was moreover some doubt as to the legality of Grey's action. Could he legislate at this juncture on a matter reserved for the consideration of the General Assembly?

17. NE, 9 July 1853, p.4c-d.
18. loc. cit.; ibid., 13 August 1853, p.7a-c.
The uncertainty which the cheap land regulations induced was compounded by Grey's continued refusal to give any hint of his plans for summoning the General Assembly, a reticence which had become all the more disturbing since April when news of the Governor's impending departure was leaked. Clifford for one feared that Grey intended to embroil the country in confusion and to make his exit before anything was finally settled. 'It must be our part by acting together with judgement to frustrate these endeavours.' But it seemed as if Grey might succeed. The provincial councils were all to meet by the end of the year and in order to function needed finance and authority. Grey provided both and split the ranks of his southern critics as a result.

In delegating power to the provincial authorities Grey was again anticipating the function of the General Assembly, although he could still point to the letter of his imperial instructions as justification for so doing. The legality of his financial arrangements was debatable. According to the Constitution Act, revenue raised by taxes levied by the General Assembly was, after specified deductions, subject to appropriation by that body, the surplus then being divided amongst the provincial governments. Under the 1848 Suspending Act, due to expire 7 March 1853, the General Legislative Council had assumed that power. In December 1852 at the final session of the Council, the Appropriation Act under which Grey expended money had been extended a further six months. After 30 September 1853 the right to appropriate revenue rested with the General Assembly and so Grey was therefore appropriating revenue to the provincial governments on his own authority.

20. Clifford to Stafford, 7 May 1853.
These factors then, the frustration and uncertainty which Grey's land regulations and financial appropriations induced, and the belief widespread amongst southern leaders that he did not intend to summon the General Assembly before his departure, were matters of concern which might well be exploited by a skilful politician. Edward Gibbon Wakefield responded readily to the challenge.

Following a serious illness which might well have impaired his judgement, Wakefield had arrived in New Zealand early in February 1853 accompanied by Henry Sewell, salaried vice-chairman of the Canterbury Association, who was commissioned with the unenviable task of winding up that body's affairs in the colony. Wakefield's reputation, his connection with the New Zealand Company and the Association, his quarrel with the revered Godley and the hostility of FitzGerald, inheritor of Godley's mantle, ensured him a cool reception in Christchurch. It took the arch intriguer only a few weeks to realise that the role of elder statesman to which he felt himself entitled would not be his in Canterbury, and on 5 March he sailed for Wellington, disappointed at the southern colonists' ingratitude but by no means disheartened.\(^23\)

On his arrival at Port Nicholson Wakefield went through the motions of offering his services as self-styled mediator between Grey and the colonists, an overture deservedly rebuffed. Wellington political leaders in turn gave him a chary welcome. Though a known opponent of Grey, Wakefield's reputation and initial approach to the Governor made for an uneasy alliance, for Featherston and the Constitutionalists were certainly not prepared to associate publicly with Wakefield and Sewell in their objections to the new land laws. The mere mention of sufficient price was

---

\(^{23}\) ibid., pp. 8-16.
anathema to land-hungry Cook Strait colonists. Neither in Wellington nor in Christchurch then did Wakefield find a community suitably deferential to his august presence. Yet the very last thing which he had anticipated in coming to ‘his’ colony was a lack of political influence; if the role of elder statesman was not automatically to be his, he would soon acquire it. For the next eighteen months Wakefield’s ambition was to disturb, direct and dominate the course of colonial politics, and few colonial politicians were unaffected in some measure by his machinations.

Within six weeks of landing in Port Nicholson Wakefield was bidding for political support, concentrating his efforts on Grey’s traditional stronghold, the small farmer community of the Hutt where, with astonishing skill – and considerable sophistry – he secured his political foothold. His long-held doctrine of the sufficient price conveniently ignored, Wakefield now stood as an advocate of cheap land for the working-settler. The uneasy alliance broke as a result. The Constitutionalists were prepared to back Wakefield in his bid for the Hutt but would not uphold a land policy which inveighed against large estates.

Elected by his Hutt supporters to both the Provincial Council and to the General Assembly, Wakefield quickly recognised the opportunity which discontent with Grey presented. He formulated plans to secure a united provincial protest against the financial arrangements and a united demand for the calling of the Assembly, but his chances of securing either were jeopardised by the antagonism between Featherston and himself, and by the favourable reaction of Wellington provincial leaders to Grey’s extension of provincial powers. Then Sewell provided an alternative front.

On coming up to Port Nicholson on Canterbury Association business in October, Sewell was immediately involved in the political intrigues of his erstwhile companion. His subsequent letter to Hugh Carleton, leader of the Auckland liberals, appealing for cooperation in the fight against Grey, was directed as much at the southern liberals as at their northern counterparts. Sewell (and Wakefield) speculated on the possibility of a separate Middle Island composed of provinces free of native troubles and basically agreed upon land policy. Ultra-provincialist Wellington was to be excluded; Nelson would be the capital and Stafford the leader of this new political entity.  

Copies of the letter were quickly circulated in the south and the hand of Wakefield, "fiend incarnate", was readily perceived. Sewell, 'tolerably straight' while under FitzGerald's eye, had obviously 'got into the said fiend's clutches again', declared C.C. Bowen, though he was prepared to concede that Sewell 'might as well try to be independent as a bird with a snake looking at it'. Weld who had been staying with Bowen in Lyttleton was angered by what he regarded as a most mischievous production: 'I believe Wakefield is at the bottom of it "divide et impera".  

Somewhat out of touch with developments in Wellington neither Weld, FitzGerald nor Bowen could believe the aspersions cast against Featherston. Furious at the attempt to put himself and Stafford in opposition, FitzGerald was inclined to support Featherston against Wakefield, even to the point of acquiescing in Grey's financial arrangements. The Canterbury leader printed his own reply to Sewell's letter, arguing that until the House of  


Representatives met, the Constitution Act gave the entire revenue to the provinces. Weld wrote anxiously to Stafford.

I hope you have not in any way lent yourself to Sewell's plans. His praise of you & his talking of Nelson as the seat of govt shew that he wants to catch you - the people here & at Otago will never hear of Nelson as the seat of govt. As to Wairau it wd be the old mistake of a govt without a settlement else Wairau is perhaps the best position I am afraid that if this letter gets round it will set all the settlements by the ears it is most mischievous. Let us get self govt wrest it from Sir G Grey first and if we are to squabble about petty local interests let that come afterwards.

Though Featherston strongly resented Sewell's comments he could not deny his predilection for provincial power, and early in November Sewell's attempts to coordinate a Nelson-Wellington protest against the appropriations were foiled by the Wellington Superintendent's opposition. On coming up to the settlement later in the month, Weld found that he had overestimated the staunchness of the old Wellington liberal party 'or I should more properly say the wideness of their views'.

You know that Wakefield's conduct at the Hutt and Sewell's letter - and their working against Featherston added to Wakefield coquetting with the govt party on his arrival - all have tended to make me distrust them. I should be very sorry to see Wakefield the constitutional leader besides I differ with him about the price of land - yet the price of land is to me a secondary question & I am quite of opinion that a much more important matter is the introduction of the Constitution in its full and unmuttilated form. I agree generally with FitzGerald's policy as set forth in his letter to Sewell & his address to his council. As far as I can read the act the whole revenue is now illegally raised, all acts & ordinances being repealed that are repugnant to the Constitution Act

Now the Constitution Act gives the General Assembly the sole power of raising the general revenue therefore it is clearly to my mind repugnant to that power to raise it in any other way. 30

Weld's comments illustrate the dilemma of his associates. Opposed to Grey's actions and doubtful of their legality, the southern liberals were dependent nevertheless on the Governor's measures for the successful functioning of the provincial assemblies. Weld was concerned at the course of events.

To my mind it is clear that he [Grey] has no right to appropriate revenue the only power ... that has the right is possibly the Provincial Councils. FitzGerald thinks they have that power under the head of laws for 'peace & good government' I think that is stretching the meaning of the words but if they have that right they clearly have the right to take everything until the Council meets - and in this FitzGerald agrees with me - at all events it is clear to me that the Provincial Govts may take the revenue as it is given them by the sole representative of the General Govt but that in taking it they should be careful to shew that they do so because it is not their province to decide on the legality of the acts of the General Govt but at the same time they should by passing some address praying for immediate assembly of the general council guard themselves from giving their sanction to the measures of Sir G Grey - I hope I am wrong but I very much fear that the old liberal party here having got the local powers they want, overlook the fact (or dispute it) that they are receiving them from an autocrat. 31

The whole affair of the Sewell letter seems trivial and absurd, but the very fact that it occurred at all, that prospective politicians in several southern centres could be so perturbed by Wakefield's activities, was a significant commentary on the political situation at the time - and a portent of what was to come. The way in

30. Weld to Stafford, 23 November 1853, Stafford MSS., F.47, No.10.

31. loc.cit. For similar reactions, see Bowen to Godley, 20 December 1853, Kilbracken MSS., I, p.67; FitzGerald to Godley, 9 December 1853, ibid., IV, pp.408-9.
which Fitzgerald and his friends reacted reflected more than mere personal dislike of Wakefield. It revealed a real distrust of that intriguer's intentions, and a genuine fear that he might achieve his ends. This fear was understandable. For it was quite obvious that the colonists now had a very shrewd and experienced politician in their midst who made the majority of newly-elected representatives feel the political novices they were. Wakefield would not hesitate to subordinate principle to expediency and would probably attract a considerable following in the House by his manoeuvrings; whereas the link which had forged the southern liberals together, opposition to Grey, had now been broken by the Governor's delegation of authority to provincial councils. Faced with a choice between certain eminence on the local scene and possible insignificance in an Auckland-based Assembly, Featherston for one had opted for the former. The conflict of priorities, local and colonial, which was to plague New Zealand politics for decades was already manifest.

As far as Weld and his associates were concerned, it did not improve the situation to find that Wakefield's comments on Featherston were substantially correct. But this in no way endeared the Canterbury politicians in particular to Wakefield. Conceding that he had been right about Featherston was one thing; associating with him politically was quite another. The sensitivity of the southern liberals on this point was well illustrated by Stafford's reaction to Weld's letter on the Sewell production. To Weld's utter dismay, Stafford had interpreted Weld's warning as a personal censure.

On reading your letter again I am more puzzled than ever - I am tempted most flatly to deny ever having written anything that could be construed into my
thinking that you were led or carried away by Wakefield or Sewell. I remember writing that.../there/ would be a cry against you - I never could have hinted that I should give credence to it even if we differed. I may have said that such a cry might hurt you in your position as Supt - but never that if they were right you were to be deterred from your own line if it coincided with theirs from fear of that cry - why I have no doubt that I too am 'mesmerized' by Wakefield it was said that I was by Featherston - at another /time/ when I was a good deal at Govt House people hinted that I might be fascinated by the rattlesnake Sir G. - if I wrote what you say I did I must have been drunk thats all.32

On 31 December 1853 George Grey sailed from New Zealand. Few viewed his departure with genuine regret. The southern colonists were too frustrated with Grey's handling of constitutional affairs to be in any mood to appreciate the considerable debt they owed him, and Weld for one was totally disillusioned. On his return from England he had scarcely envisaged that twelve months would pass by with the colonists still subjected to political despotism. Self-government was now all-important to Weld and his resentment of the Governor's apparent obstructiveness on this very issue far outweighed the high personal esteem in which he had previously held 'King Grey'.

If Grey's refusal to call the General Assembly together before his departure was open to criticism, even more so was his failure to advise Acting-Governor Robert Wynyard on how to deal with the demand for responsible government, a demand which Grey had assiduously ignored but which was bound to be voiced when the Assembly met. Neither the British Government nor the Imperial Parliament had contemplated the immediate concession of responsible government.33 Neither the Royal Instructions nor Sir John

32. Weld to Stafford, 2 January 1854, Stafford MSS., F.47, No.11.
Pakington's despatches had made any reference to the subject. Yet southern leaders such as FitzGerald, Clifford, Stafford, Weld, Featherston and Fox, inspired to some extent by Godley's more radical utterances, contended that the Constitution Act implicitly embodied the principle of responsibility, and were to act in accordance with this belief.

In May 1854 the elected representatives at last converged on Auckland, Weld coming up on the steamer from Nelson together with David Monro, Francis Dillon Bell, and FitzGerald. The Taranaki members were taken on board on 21 May and two days later the boat steamed into the Manukau. Landing proved hazardous. Like Julius Caesar with the standard of the 10th Legion, Weld seized his cigar box and led the way; 'whilst Old Rhodes [W.B.] emulated William the Conqueror and took possession of the soil by (stumbling over some sharp corals &) wallowing with his fat face & hands in mud & water'. From Onehunga the southerners rode through countryside which impressed Weld as the most English he had seen outside of England:

stone fences & stone gate posts, hedges neat cottages, large fields of the most luxuriant grass - we were in a word all enchanted. Auckland itself is a very badly laid out town but not unlike an English sea side port. The scenery not equal to Wellington or the port of Nelson when the snowy range is clear but still beautiful. Many of the buildings infinitely better than anything we have in the South - as to accommodation as far as I can hear all of the Southerners are very much better off than we anticipated. Clifford & I are very well lodged a cottage to ourselves 2 bedrooms sitting room ... good feed all for £5 a week 2 10 each.

Only Auckland society failed to reach expectations. At the

34. Weld Journal 1854, 19-23 May, Weld Papers, IV.
'really capital' ball given by Wynyard for the assembled representatives there was a large attendance of ladies, all well dressed and many very pretty - but Weld did not see 'any one very transcendent beauty'.

On 24 May members gathered at the Colonial Office Chambers were sworn into office, the formal opening being delayed two days while a Speaker was chosen. Anxious to forestall any manoeuvring by Wakefield, Weld urged a quick decision. Already he was suspicious of Wakefield's bidding for Auckland and Otago support: 'What a pity that a man whose views are generally so correct cant work above board but must be always burrowing.' Even Wakefield's comments on the principle of religious equality, an issue raised on the first day by James Macandrew when he moved that prayers should precede the opening of formal business, were dismissed by Weld as 'palpably plausible & buttery to the Otago men'. Hyper-sensitive on the issue, Weld put forward an amendment: 'That this House, whilst fully recognizing the importance of religious observances, will not commit itself to any act which may tend to subvert that perfect religious equality that is recognized by our Constitution, and therefore cannot consistently open this House with public prayer.'

This, his first speech in the House of Representatives, threw him into 'a funk'. He divided the House on the first motion

37. Weld to Stafford, 25/26 May 1854.
38. loc. cit.
39. PD, 1854-5, p.5.
40. Weld Journal 1854, 26 May.
brought before it and found himself one of a 'glorious minority'. 'I think I got through it better than I should have expected for the first time', Weld informed Stafford, 'though I did not say half as much or say it half as well as I might have done had the thing been less novel to me.' 41

To most members the 'debate' was merely a preliminary skirmish to fill in time as they waited for the Governor's speech. Until that opening address they were in the dark as to the policy of the Executive - if it had one. 42 Wynyard failed to illuminate the situation. The initiative it was clear would have to come from the assembled representatives and after some initial backroom discussion, 43 it was decided that FitzGerald, the only provincial superintendent in the House, would move the Address-in-Reply. Then Wakefield would propose a resolution on responsible government. Some such move was clearly necessary since, after desultory discussion on the Address-in-Reply, members found themselves with nothing to do. Perhaps anticipating events in the House, officials had prepared neither bills nor estimates for the consideration of members, and although individual representatives could bring in private bills and the Governor could bring down business by message, neither course was a satisfactory long-term solution. Nor was there any Executive officer in the House answerable for government policy. 44 Wakefield's opportunity had arrived.

41. Weld to Stafford, 25 26 May 1854.
42. loc. cit.
43. See J.E. FitzGerald to W.J.W. Hamilton, 24 January June 1854, Selfe MSS., I, No. 97.
44. loc cit.; Weld to S. Scrope, 14 August 1854, Weld MSS., No. 4.
He opened debate on 2 June, speaking at length, explaining the concept, emphasising the consequences of an irresponsible executive and a powerless legislature, drawing Jamaican and, predictably, Canadian analogies, suggesting as a compromise solution that one or two persons with seats in the House should be appointed to the Executive and charged to explain and carry through government policy during and after the session, their tenure of office being dependent on the House's approval of their policy and conduct. Yet despite his extensive coverage of the subject, Wakefield left a great deal unsaid, particularly with regard to the position of existing office holders. Significantly, while he denied that any imperial enactment would be necessary to effect this major change, at no time did Wakefield specifically claim that the home government had intended responsible government and representative institutions to be inaugurated simultaneously.

The concept of ministerial responsibility, virtually unknown to the mass of electors and viewed through a haze of ignorance and suspicion by Aucklanders wary of any southern ascendancy, was firmly supported, even if imperfectly understood, by most of the southern members. Weld argued that responsible government afforded the only hope of a strong and efficient central power in the colony; FitzGerald and Sewell were adamant that no legal obstacles existed to prevent its immediate cession. Northerners were hesitant. How would ministerial responsibility affect provincial - that is Auckland - interests? Wakefield allayed suspicion by promising that one seat in the compromise cabinet should be reserved for a northern member. Then the House

45. PD, 1854-5, pp.27-32.
46. Stuart, p.141.
47. Weld to Scrope, 14 August 1854; PD, 1854-5, pp.32-33.
48. ibid., pp.40-41 (FitzGerald), 45-47 (Sewell), 48 (Greenwood), 52 (Wakefield).
voted overwhelmingly in favour of change (29:1)\(^{49}\) and when on 7 June Wynyard sent for FitzGerald and Monro, mover and seconder of the Address-in-Reply, Weld was elated. Responsible government seemed actually within reach. Full of excitement he began a letter to Godley.

I write to you on perhaps the most auspicious day that has ever dawned on New Zealand - in a word FitzGerald and Monro have been sent for to advise with the acting Governor about the formation of a responsible ministry .... we have had three days debate on Responsible govt. Wakefield moving the resolution - out of a house of 30 24 spoke and almost all really spoke uncommonly well - the public attended in great numbers and are very much pleased - I have been quite astonished and I am sure you would have been to see things so well done I really cant say amongst the more untried men to whom to award the palm.... I myself find that I have gained some kudos - and to my astonishment discover that hesitation in great degree vanishes when I am on my legs - the worst of the debate was its one sidedness - Forsaith standing alone against us he is one of the nasty sort of old native protectors Monro was very wishy-washy - he has lost reputation here already .... Wynyard will have nothing to do with Wakefield who is furious - not that Wakefield wishes to take office - he does not - but he likes to have his hands in the pie - to pull the strings.

Weld was overstating the case somewhat. The debate on responsible government had lasted the three days only because practically every member felt this was an issue on which he ought to air an opinion. Few were worth hearing; confusion not clarity of thought characterised their comments on constitutional affairs. But Weld's assessment of Wakefield was accurate.

Outlining the likely course of action, Weld noted that members from the House would be added to the Executive to direct and to be responsible for the policy of the Government, the old officials quietly resigning once the new appointees got into routine.

\(^{49}\) ibid., p.68.
'They are willing to do so at least Swainson says so—they see their time is come—and by retiring gracefully and advising Wynyard to accept the new order of things cordially they will deserve well of the colony and get a much better chance of compensation for the loss of their salaries.' The principal difficulty of the moment was to form a ministry.

Stafford who would I think have taken permanent office is not in the house—Monro we all politically (not personally) distrust—Wakefield won't take office and if he would he is distrusted rightly or wrongly from his constant manoeuvring and dodging. FitzGerald wants to stick to Canterbury but I have hopes that he will take office at all events for the present—you will probably be surprised as I was to hear that I appear to have been thought of by almost all the members—Including Wakefield Sewell etc.—and by some as prime minister (!!!) I think I have not the necessary experience in debate, knowledge of routine of business, or of the antecedents of NZ. Govt. to allow me or hope that I could carry on with credit—besides I do not want to bind myself to a thing of this sort—I have thought too that my tendencies are rather too strong in favour of a strong central Govt. to carry the house with me—but on that point a reaction is taking place and they are fast taking the same views that I do.

The one thing he did dread, Weld confided, was a coalition of FitzGerald and Monro. 'Monro will ten to one break FitzGerald down—Wakefield is to be feared by who ever takes office and Monro would be FitzGerald's weak point—and give Wakefield a hold of him.' But Monro himself recognised that his politics were too anti-provincial to go down with the House, and it was amicably settled that FitzGerald alone should attempt to form a ministry. The Canterbury Superintendent immediately approached Weld and, after some hesitation, Sewell. Both accepted and on

51. FitzGerald to Hamilton, 24 January ∕ June ∕ 1854; NE, 15 July 1854, p. 2a-c.
52. Weld to Godley, 9 June 1854, p. 173.
53. FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, Kilbracken MSS., IV, p. 433-4.
10 June Wynyard was notified of their decision. Weld viewed events with a mixture of amazement, determination and delight.

Auckland
11 June 1854

My dear Charles,

I hardly know how to begin a letter to you my head is so full but you and Mary will alike open your eyes when I tell you that at this present writing I am a Minister of New Zealand! I have it in my power if I wish and have abilities to wield the Assembly to be prime minister! in 2 or 3 months time, and have for the last day or two been closeted from ten o'clock am till 12 pm concocting a line of policy & manufacturing draft bills wherewith to meet the parliament on Thursday next - open your eyes - mine I think will never close again - I hardly know what I am - or who I am - dealing summarily (with my two colleagues of the cabinet) in measures of revenue - estimates - native management - administration of justice - postal arrangements - steam communications etc etc etc and all this greatness most unexpectedly & suddenly thrust upon me - You will say that I am mad - such is not the case however you will say I shall make a smash of it that remains to be seen - if so it is not my blame for as I said before this has beer thrust upon me - however it may be I am one of three composing the responsible ministry of His Excellency Leut Col Wynyard Acting Govnr of New Zealand and having to deal with the first General Assembly of New Zealand in just the same manner & with just the same powers (except those of peace & war & similar 'Imperial' questions) as are possessed by the English ministry - It is not wonderful - But to tell you how all this came to pass

Sketching the developments prior to 7 June, Weld proceeded to explain his own involvement and the proposed administrative arrangements.

54. Weld Journal 1854, 10 June; PD, 1854-5, pp.255-6, (FitzGerald).
FitzGerald is one of the best men we have a man of great abilities - a good deal of experience in such matters and a thoroughly gentlemanly & honest man - FitzGerald at once came to me - it appears that from my knowing & being known in several of the NZ settlements I have many friends & people generally have expressed great confidence in me & FitzGerald made it almost imperative on me to join him - I felt that when so strongly pressed I could not refuse to carry out a system I had voted for - he also obtained the assistance of the ablest lawyer in the house & after talking over matters we found we agreed so well in our views that we determined to accept. The present Attorney General a clever fellow will resign and take office again with us - the Auditor General is not a political man & will of course retain his office he is a very efficient & business-like fellow - the Secretary (ex officio prime minister) & Treasurer will resign - they are useless, obstinate, real Colonial Office old fogies - and as they wont work under the new order of things - we shall give them a retiring allowance & they will I dare say be as glad to get out of office as undoubtedly the colonists will be glad to get rid of them - You must understand that we were all willing to give the old officials a fair trial (for we dont want their places) if they would have consented to work under the new system, but they wont. We shall let them remain in office for a little time to help in the routine work until we can relieve them of their duties & they wish it that they may not appear to be turned out and we though the Colony has suffered much from their misrule do not wish unnecessarily to mortify or in any way to injure them - unless they intrigue against us - the Acting Governor is a straightforward sensible and manly old soldier and I think his feelings are with us - At present we are the officially recognized advisers of His Excellency charged with originating and carrying out the Govt (i.e. Our) own policy in the 2 houses as long as we can retain their support & confidence - our difficulties are chiefly those of intrigue arising from our peculiar position, our policy I am pretty sure will command the support of all the moderate thinking men in the country if it gets a fair trial, for the present we hold no nominal offices and get no pay -
Adverting to his own prospects Weld continued:

I am talked of as the future 'Secretary' or head of the Govt FitzGerald will take no office though he is our leader this session he finds it quite impossible to leave his own affairs public & private in his own settlement & consequently the leadership devolves on me with the vacant 'Secretaryship' if I choose to take it — I suppose the pay would be about a thousand a year — I fear that it would require a better head than mine (tho certainly its late occupant under an autocratic and very clever active Governor was little better than a fool) next I have no knowledge of the routine of office or of the antecedents of that office — moreover I am more in my element in the saddle than at the desk — lastly I should have to give up all attention to my private business — On the other hand it puts me in a position possibly to benefit my religion — it occupies my mind — & settles me down — and gives me a training in public business — I wish you were here to advise me — had I been a married man intending to remain some years in N Zealand I think I should have taken it — but at the end of the session when the time comes if our ministry stands & we find no better man in my place — it will then be time to consider it. In the interim the fact alone of my being one of those to set the system going will always give me a position as well as a training in political business if that should ever be useful to me in the future .... I am much too tired to write more — I cannot help feeling that there is a design of God in this sudden unsought for & unexpected crisis of my affairs — what it may end in I dont know — but what with Clifford as Speaker myself minister & several of the members Catholics I must say the prospects of full fair play for religion in NZ seem secure even should I find it impossible or inadvisable to remain in office — such a position is won as must be a great advantage to us. 55

55. Weld to Charles Weld, 11 June 1854, Weld Papers, I, No.11; see also Weld to Scrope, 14 August 1854.
To Godley, Weld gave a similar account. Auditor-General Charles Knight was ready to cooperate; Swainson 'the only politician of the lot and lawyer like ready to work under the new system' was to resign and take office on a responsible basis though, Weld added with unconscious prophecy, 'we of course cant tell how far he is to be trusted'. Shepherd and Sinclair, 'regular old officials', were to go. They were of no use.

The astonishment - stupefaction this has caused in Auckland you may imagine - the mass of officials scarcely believe it yet - we walk about in a cloud of wonder the people look at us as if we were the occupants of a conquered city, and when yesterday ... we entered an office installed ourselves and set to work concocting bills and sending to officials for information the effect even on ourselves was something indescribable.

Their efforts were premature. Responsible government had in no way been obtained.

FitzGerald and his colleagues understood that Swainson, Shepherd and Sinclair would all resign once the House granted them adequate pensions as compensation for their loss of office. However, when communicating this understanding to the House, FitzGerald made no suggestion that such resignation was contingent upon instructions from England; neither did he mention any written guarantee that the permanent officials were pledged to resign as proposed. The understanding was verbal only. Nor did FitzGerald stipulate whose advice was to prevail with the Governor in the event of a clash of opinion between the three executive officers responsible to the Crown and the three ministers responsible to the Assembly. FitzGerald, Sewell and Weld simply assumed that Wynyard's apparent willingness to concede a

measure of responsible government presupposed a readiness to work within that system. That assumption was false. 57

The first indication of pending trouble came in the Legislative Council only a few hours after FitzGerald had addressed the lower house. Attorney-General Swainson reiterated that current office holders would not impede arrangements for increasing the strength of the General Government and for establishing harmonious relations between the Executive and the newly-constituted representative body. 58 But when Councillor Frederick Whitaker asked if Swainson was now to be regarded as Speaker of the Legislative Council or as Attorney-General holding office under the new government, Swainson left no room for doubt. As long as he held office he should continue to be Her Majesty's Attorney-General in New Zealand. 59 The implication was obvious. He was responsible to the Crown not to the Assembly; he would retire only when the request of the elected representatives was confirmed by a governor acting on orders from England. At no time was Swainson prepared to regard his office or his advice as subordinate to that of the newly-appointed Executive Councillors responsible to the House.

Swainson had handled the situation well. Recognising the determination of members he had advised Wynyard to adopt the Wakefieldian idea of a compromise cabinet. But this astute official had no intention of jeopardising his own position of influence. The Acting-Governor had conceded the shadow not the substance of power; the elected ministers had failed to perceive

57. FD, 1854-5, pp.85-92, p.87 in particular.
58. ibid., pp.81-84.
59. ibid., p.84.
the difference. They thought discussions with Wynyard in the Executive Council superseded the written arrangement that the position of the old officials would have to be referred to the Colonial Office. 60 Sewell as a lawyer might well have queried this assumption had not he and FitzGerald both been totally convinced that imperial approval was unnecessary. The resignation of the old officials was an integral part of the change to responsible government, a change which they erroneously believed it lay within Wynyard's power to effect. At no time did Wynyard or Swainson dispel the illusion. Swainson had outmanoeuvred the three parliamentary tiros in a manner worthy of Wakefield.

And what of Wakefield himself? To his own chagrin and surprise the protagonist had been unexpectedly upstaged.

The process had been gradual. On 2 June Swainson had privately informed Clifford that responsible government would be conceded. Clifford told Weld and, from a somewhat misguided sense of obligation, 61 Wakefield. The three men spent the evening considering possible ministers and agreed to keep the discussion confidential but Wakefield changed his mind, on 3 June professing great discomfort at being a party to secret communication with the Executive. Possibly he was suspicious of Swainson's intentions; probably he wanted full freedom of manoeuvre. Clifford however replied that communication would

60. Stuart, p.161; Weld to Scrope, 14 August 1854; FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp. 435-6, 443.

61. Clifford apparently felt he owed his success in obtaining the speakership in some measure to Wakefield's support. Gaudin, p.100. He had also developed a considerable respect for Wakefield's political abilities as a result of their association in the Wellington Provincial Council. Stuart, Chapter VII, passim.
have to be secret since Swainson dreaded appearing to be influenced by Wakefield and had intimated that a great personal difficulty would be removed if Wakefield did not expect to be openly consulted.  

As Weld informed Godley, Wakefield was furious at this unexpected setback. He felt he had a right to be consulted and wanted his influence openly acknowledged, a not unreasonable expectation given his leading part in promoting the original debate on responsible government. But Clifford refused to endanger the chance of success. He reiterated that contact between Wakefield and the Executive must be secret through the Speaker or not at all, and unwittingly played right into the Attorney-General's camp, for Wakefield now declined further communication.

Wakefield had seen two ways of obtaining public acclaim — by being called in on consultations with Wynyard or by controlling the composition of the mixed ministry. Swainson blocked one alternative: Wakefield now turned to the other and approached FitzGerald, his hostility to the Canterbury Superintendent conveniently forgotten. Here he miscalculated completely. Wakefield was the last person with whom FitzGerald would confer. Their mutual antipathy was too deep-seated. When summoned by Wynyard, FitzGerald made no effort to press for Wakefield's inclusion in the discussions.

Then fate — in the form of Sewell — intervened. It was impressed upon FitzGerald that one of his ministers should be a lawyer, and Whitaker was strongly hinted at as an ideal choice.

62. Wakefield to Clifford, 19 June 1854; Clifford to Wakefield, 19 June 1854, Clifford MSS. Extracts from this correspondence are reproduced in M.F.Lloyd-Prichard, The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, Auckland, 1969, pp.76-78.

63. Wakefield to Clifford, 19 June 1854.

64. FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp.432-3.
FitzGerald made a few enquiries, determined to have nothing to do with the Aucklander, and turned to Sewell, his respect for the latter's ability overcoming the misgivings he felt about their cooperation in view of past differences. Sewell insisted on consulting Wakefield. Accompanied by Weld, he visited him on 8 June. Wakefield was asked 'out of compliment' to take office. He refused but gave Sewell his blessing. This was Wakefield's major blunder. He need only have withheld support for the FitzGerald coalition to collapse: there was no other lawyer with whom Weld and FitzGerald would associate. Wakefield then compounded his error by agreeing to explain the new ministerial arrangements to a private meeting of the members, a public commitment to support a ministry in the making of which he had played no real part.

Illness and ambition had warped Wakefield's judgement. Wynyard refused to consult him; FitzGerald refused to involve him; Sewell offered Wakefield his last chance of securing the influence he craved, but even with Sewell, his alter ego, in the ministry, Wakefield still had no hope of achieving his goal. FitzGerald was too hostile and Weld too suspicious to include Wakefield in their deliberations. Wakefield fulminated against the train of events, began wondering just what role Clifford had played, and decided to check Swainson's attitude. The Attorney-General had not served a political apprenticeship under George

65. ibid., p.433.
66. Weld Journal 1854, 8 June.
68. loc.cit.
69. PD, 1854-5, p.101, a compliment which Sewell did not entirely appreciate. ibid., p.105.
Grey for nothing. Swainson smoothly assured Wakefield that he had always wanted to meet him for the express purpose of conversing about the best means of giving effect to the decision of the House.

In a burst of acrimonious correspondence Wakefield virtually accused Clifford of deliberate deception, the consequences of which would be grave. 'If I had not been carefully excluded from the parleys which preceded the formation of a government, some errors in that work, of which the ill effects will now be acknowledged by everybody, would have been avoided.'

This was no idle boast. For all his duplicity and love of intrigue, Wakefield was a skilful politician and had he been consulted, it is unlikely that the issues of resignation and responsibility would have remained so ambiguous. The mixed ministry might have survived. By excluding him the ministers ensured their defeat because Edward Gibbon Wakefield was still determined to pull the strings. He could not see that the very system of parliamentary government which he had sought to inaugurate mitigated against the very type of backstage influence which he still sought to obtain. When he realised that the men whom he had supported would frustrate that ambition, Wakefield became their arch opponent.

70. Wakefield to Clifford, 19 June 1854. Realising that further argument was useless, Clifford annotated the correspondence and left it as a puzzle for posterity, his sole clue being the label: 'Curious correspondence on the formation of the first responsible government in New Zealand shewing the tricky characters of two important personages on that stage.' cit. Gaudin, p.106.

CHAPTER VI

CONFUSION: 1854

In many ways it is tempting to view the first session of the New Zealand parliament in terms of a magnificent farce. Its history certainly has dramatic potential - plots and counter plots, battles and intrigue, villains and heroes, dénouement and débacle. To the players, however, the drama was a deadly serious affair and the impact of their participation would be lasting, both on themselves and on the political development of the country at large.

Had Wynyard been less dependent on his advisers and more familiar with constitutional procedure he might well have resisted the demand of the House and instead have presented the representatives with a coherent policy for their discussion pending the receipt of instructions from Home. To appoint three elected representatives to his Executive Council may have seemed a reasonable compromise, but it was unwise. A mixed ministry was no solution to the political situation. FitzGerald and his associates acted as if responsible government was already theirs; Swainson and his colleagues knew better. And Wakefield hovered in the wings, ready to capitalise on any opportunity to play a prominent part.

For a number of weeks FitzGerald, Sewell and Weld believed themselves to be acting the role of responsible ministers. They drew up a policy dealing with such matters as provincial powers, waste land disposal, native land purchase, a native department, and financial arrangements; communications, the New Zealand Company debt, alterations to the constitution, customs and tariff measures also received attention. 1

Their most immediate problem, however, lay in the lack of government representation in the Legislative Council since Swainson refused to resign the Speakership and take office as the three ministers had anticipated, and neither Colonial Secretary Sinclair nor Colonial Treasurer Shepherd would undertake to hold himself responsible for ministerial policy. 2 Anxious to settle the question in face of growing dissension in the lower house, 3 the three ministers laid before Wynyard a strong expression of their view that without the cooperation of the old officials it would be impossible to carry on the Government. 4 Wynyard decided to call a fourth non-official member to the Executive Council and appointed F.D. Bell. This move gave the elected ministers numerical dominance in that body and representation in the upper house, but was not the solution they wanted. 5 The old officials still held aloof, able to dissociate themselves from government policy.

Wakefield it was who made a concerted effort to capitalise on ministerial difficulties. He criticised the flaws in the administrative arrangement, noting especially the omission of a northern member from the ministry; he challenged the policy presented by ministers as involving long-term suggestions peculiarly inconsistent with the essentially provisional nature of the government; he moved that a select committee be appointed to enquire into the justice of Auckland's share of the New Zealand

2. ibid., 26, 27 June.
3. e.g., PD, 1854-5, pp.129-38.
5. FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp.434-5.
Company debt, thus endearing himself even further to northern representatives. And when Bell resigned and T.H. Bartley, member for Auckland City, was offered the vacancy, thus removing one source of complaint, Wakefield attempted to reinforce his following among Auckland and Otago members by making an all-out attack on the proposed Waste Lands Bill.

Southern members had come to the Assembly pledged to vote for localised control even though the Constitution Act expressly prohibited the provinces from dealing with the waste lands. But as Grey had amply demonstrated, the Governor had been able to regulate the sale of land until the Assembly met, and ministers proposed to continue this power—within clearly defined limits. In effect the Governor would issue as land laws regulations drawn up and approved by the respective provincial authorities. The latter would therefore obtain effective control of land policy without transgressing the letter of the Act.

With his i.e.,e-found solicitude for the working-settler, Wakefield challenged a policy which would give full powers of land disposal to provincial authorities and which seemed designed to invite speculation. Other critics, James Mackay, Macandrew,

6. PD, 1854-5, pp.140-44; Weld Journal 1854, 29 June.
7. See FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, p.435; Weld Journal 1854, 8 June, for ministerial views on other Auckland candidates for office.
8. PD, 1854-5, pp.88-89 for an outline of the measure; ibid., pp.168-76 for the first part of the debate.
9. ibid., p.103.
Jerningham Wakefield, Hugh Carleton and T.S. Forsaith in turn censured the bill for its evasive character. In the ensuing debate Weld countered Wakefield's objections with shrewd and cogent argument in what was by far his best speech of the session. He not only exposed the inconsistency of Wakefield's stand on the provincial control of waste lands, but he challenged Wakefield to define precisely what he did mean by a sufficient price. The specious and devious argument with which Wakefield sought to counter this attack led to his rupture with Sewell, a loss of standing in the House, and the open abandonment of the most fundamental tenet of his theory of colonisation, the sufficient price, as inappropriate in the present circumstances of New Zealand.

Majority support for the Waste Lands Bill and opposition to Wakefield's working-settler amendments were a timely vindication for the harassed ministers since ominous noises

10. PD, 1854-5, pp.189-97.
11. ibid., pp. 197-201.
12. ibid., pp. 201-11.
13. Weld Journal 1854, 11 July; PD, 1854-5, pp.211-14; FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, p.437.
14. PD, 1854-5, pp.233-6, 240, 246; Stuart, pp.174-5; Lloyd Prichard, pp. 80-81; FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp. 438-40. One-third of the waste lands of each province was to be reserved, in blocks of 5000 acres, for bona fide working-settlers. Lots of not more than 200 acres were to be sold at the lowest price, upset or fixed, required in the province at the time of sale. Payment could be deferred five years with selling title conditional upon a five-year occupation.
were sounding in the upper house. If Councillors were to be believed serious confusion existed in their minds as to the position of the old officials vis-a-vis the new, Swainson making no effort to clarify the situation. Also Wakefield had been lobbying behind the scenes and it looked as if the Council supported the principle of Wakefield's amendments to the Waste Lands Bill. Conflict seemed imminent.

Disturbed at these signs, Sewell, FitzGerald and Weld turned their attention 'most seriously' to the question of permanent arrangements for carrying on the Government after the session. The major problem as Weld saw it was that of finding a replacement for FitzGerald who was still resolved to return to Canterbury while Stafford, the logical successor in Weld's view, refused to give any hint as to his future connection with the central government. Eventually it was settled that Weld should be Colonial Secretary, Sewell Colonial Treasurer, and Bartley Attorney-General; the existing office holders would be asked to resign.

We were strengthened in our decision by the circumstance that we had lately discovered that dispatches had been sent home without our knowledge relative to the first ministerial arrangements - FitzGerald took a less decided view on these matters than the rest of us - he was afraid of putting Wynard in a fix. Sewell agreed to abide by my advice. Stafford & Featherston whom we consulted both agreed in my view as did Clifford, Wortley etc. The necessity of decided steps became evident from the temper of the House. Our own supporters began to feel that we were in a false position and to threaten not to grant supplies or pass

---

15. Stuart, p.176; Lloyd Prichard, p.81, footnote 44.
measures giving power to the Executive until we cd assure them of the entire responsibility of the Executive whilst on the other hand we were constantly taunted by the opposition. 16

The ambiguity of the original arrangements, Gibbon Wakefield's determined opposition, the 'fearfully complicated' state of financial and political affairs, and the 'obstructiveness' of the old officials had all combined to bring the situation to a point of crisis. 17 The 'total confusion' of the colonial treasury together with the reputed discontent of ministerial supporters finally persuaded FitzGerald to act. 18 He called on Wynyard to ask for the resignation of the old officials. Wynyard wavered. He would comply only if pressed by the House. FitzGerald threatened resignation. Wynyard gave in and declared that the old officials must go if they could not command the confidence of a majority of the House. 19

But by the time ministers acting in accordance with the Governor's instructions 20 formally presented their request in writing, Wynyard had changed his mind. He could not ask his permanent officials to relinquish their posts: duty, the absence of imperial instructions (and Swainson's advice) forbade it.

17. Weld to Maria Weld, 31 July 1854, Weld MSS., No.3; also Weld to Scrope, 14 August 1854; Weld to Godley, 24 September 1854, Kilbracken MSS., II, p.178; Fox to Godley, 26 August 1854, ibid., VII, p.712.
18. FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp.441-2.
19. ibid., pp.442-3.
20. Stuart, p. 178-9; Lloyd Prichard, p.82; PD, 1854-5, pp.254-5.
Only then did ministers realise that the old officials had no intention of surrendering their positions until orders were received from England. Although Sinclair offered to resign and Wynyard was prepared to make the Colonial Secretaryship a responsible office, Weld refused further compromise and declared that he would not undertake to carry on the government unless all political offices were filled by really efficient men cooperating cordially. He resigned. Sewell and Bartley did likewise. FitzGerald hesitated, trying in vain to find a solution, then he too resigned and Wynyard, on Swainson's advice, sent for Wakefield.

The three ministers clearly felt that they had been the victims of treachery and deception. To some extent their bitterness was justified but the ultimate responsibility for their fate was theirs alone. They had deceived themselves when believing that constitutional change could be effected without reference to England and Swainson through Wynyard had deliberately fostered this illusion. It was a skilful way of stalling by compromise, and without Wakefield to stir up opposition within the House it might have worked. Wakefield's activities forced the elected ministers to seek a reinforcement of their position and this in turn exposed that position as indefensible. The eventual outcome was a reversion to official executive control, but in the meantime Wakefield made one last effort to direct events.

21. FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp.442–3; Weld to Scrope, 14 August 1854.
22. loc. cit.
23. FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp.443–4.
Following Fitzgerald's ministerial explanation to the House on 3 August, Wakefield announced his chosen role as mediator in the present crisis. He disclaimed any intention of taking office or of heading a ministry but he threatened that in the event of prorogation, the Acting-Governor was guaranteed his support. Yet there were two points of weakness in Wakefield's position. To ensure a successful direction of affairs he had to be Wynyard's closest adviser, a position held firmly by Swainson; he had also to secure a Wakefieldian ministry, and would then need to goad the ex-ministers and their supporters into rash action which could be construed as hostile to the Administration and which would therefore serve as an excuse for precipitating a dissolution. But the majority of members were far more hostile to Wakefield himself and were unlikely to force a confrontation with Wynyard, the outcome of which might be a ministry manipulated by Wakefield, unrestrained by parliament, scheming away the waste lands to his heart's content.

25. PD, 1854-5, pp.253-8; Fitzgerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, p.443. The interpretation of treachery and deception was upheld, not unexpectedly, by two of the leading southern newspapers, both of which were firmly committed to the 'responsible government' cause. See LT, 26 August 1854, p.4a-b; 30 August 1854, p.2a-b; NE, 2 September 1854, p.2a-d, though note the comments of 'Publicola', an Auckland correspondent for the Nelson paper, ibid., 23 August 1854, p.4a-c. In Auckland the New Zealander was pro-Wakefield; the Southern Cross favoured the ex-ministers. The Wellington Independent took up what opponents regarded as an ultra-provincialist standpoint.


27. Stuart, p.183.

28. Fitzgerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp.444-5.
Perceiving Wakefield's design, the majority supported Sewell's policy of studied moderation. An address to the Acting-Governor on 9 August focussed on Wakefield's irresponsible position and urged Wynyard to be advised solely by his permanent officials. The ex-ministers drew up private memoranda giving their version of how the crisis occurred; these were not communicated to Wynyard at this time, however, the authors declaring themselves anxious that no matters personal to themselves should further complicate the difficult position in which they felt Wynyard had placed himself.

Message No. 30, Wynyard's reply to the House's address of 9 August, assured the representatives that every step taken by the Acting-Governor during the present emergency had had the unqualified concurrence and support of his constitutional advisers. To the majority this message made nonsense of Wakefield's claim to be acting as Wynyard's sole adviser. Wakefield denied that he had lied - and for once was telling the truth. He had boasted ambiguously of seeing Wynyard alone but he had never actually stipulated that the Acting-Governor was taking only his advice. He knew perfectly well how members had interpreted his words but Wakefield, like Swainson, had seen no point in clarifying a situation while its confusion worked to his advantage.

30. PD, 1854-5, pp.283-90.
32. PD, 1854-5, pp.297-8.
33. Weld Journal 1854, 15 August.
34. PD, 1854-5, p.322.
Since Wakefield's stalwarts numbered less than one-third of the House, his only chance of securing a majority and a pliant ministry was to capitalise on the restlessness and discontent growing amongst southern members who had now been three months in Auckland. The hard core of opposition might be considerably reduced if the House were prorogued until after the departure of the next steamer for a sufficient number of southerners might pack their bags and leave in disgust. Such a strategem must have appealed to the Attorney-General as well. Wakefield would incur the odium of the Assembly for precipitating the course of action while Swainson's post would be secure for the remainder of the session. A House and Legislative Council dominated by Aucklanders would be unlikely to press for constitutional change until the Imperial government granted the necessary authority.

The prorogation was effected with appropriate dramatics. On 17 August Clifford informed the House of Wynyard's painful conviction that, so far as legislation for the service of the colony was concerned, the session had come to an end. Rather than prorogue indefinitely, however, he hoped that a fortnight for reflection would induce a mood of cooperation; meanwhile, the Message continued, such members would be added to the Executive Council as would give to all provinces effectual voice and influence in both the legislative and executive branches of government. It was also the Acting-Governor's intention to despatch Home an earnest request for the introduction of responsible government in New Zealand.

35. Weld to Scrope, 14 August 1854; FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp.447-8; Fanny FitzGerald to W.S.Vaux, 20 August 1854, Vaux MSS., p.16,Du Ho.
No sooner had Clifford finished reading this message than a second was announced. Wyndham's envoy had been waiting at the door. Rightly suspecting that this was the actual order to prorogue, Sewell and FitzGerald moved an immediate consideration of the first message and a suspension of standing orders. Wakefield's supporters promptly tried obstructive tactics and the majority, further incensed, passed 'very strong' resolutions against the Executive's latest mode of proceeding. 36

Then followed 'days of ferment ... varying rumours & reports', 37 and the strategic retreat of Wakefield. Wyndham, with Swainson's assiduous encouragement, was having second thoughts about an Executive Council which would include representatives from all provinces, and when Wakefield visited the Attorney-General to check on the fate of the proposal, Swainson suggested two possible courses of action: further prorogation, or concessions to the majority, such as absolute provincial control of waste lands. Neither scheme suited Wakefield. He, it seemed, had planned to establish a pliant ministry, obtain a dissolution and appeal to the country with a land policy aimed at the working-settler yet, on Wakefield's own admission, Swainson's concurrence and support were essential for the success of any policy. 38 Wyndham would never adopt Wakefield's suggestions against Swainson's advice. This fact Wakefield now recognised. He adopted the only practicable solution - and 'resigned'. 39

36. PD, 1854-5, pp.334-40; Weld Journal 1854, 17 August; FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp.448-50.
37. Weld Journal 1854, 18-22 August.
39. ibid., p.348.
The majority members continued to meet at King's boarding house, the venue of the southerners during the session. There was some talk of Monro's forming a compromise ministry, an idea favoured by FitzGerald but opposed by Sewell and Weld as a retrograde step.\(^{40}\) Weld counselled patience. Now that Wakefield had retired, he argued, it was better to leave matters in the hands of the old Executive than to risk another mixed government and another failure. Carleton and Sewell agreed with him; FitzGerald 'rather wild' leaned to a compromise. Frustration and impatience increased and Weld himself felt 'very sick & tired of this sort of life'.\(^{41}\) Then on 24 August Wynyard sent for Whitaker, Forsaith, Featherston and Monro. Weld was wary; 'the truth of the matter is that the old officials though they stick to office badly want to shift the responsibility of their acts on other shoulders'.\(^{42}\)

Although Whitaker and Forsaith, the Attorney-General's followers according to Weld, affected to doubt the possibility, Featherston and Monro assured Wynyard that the majority would cooperate in passing the estimates and essential legislation\(^ {43}\) and this assurance made a re-prorogation impossible. But then the Wakefieldian minority approached Wynyard. They still advocated a mixed government representative of all the provinces, and proposed that if such a ministry failed to obtain a working majority, its members would nevertheless continue in office but

\(^{40}\) Weld Journal 1854, 18-22 August.
\(^{41}\) ibid., 23 August.
\(^{42}\) ibid., 24 August.
\(^{43}\) ibid., 25, 26 August.
would advocate a dissolution and an appeal to the country. Clearly Wakefield was still active behind the scenes.

Wynyard compromised. He agreed to appoint four representatives to the Executive, but in the event of their policy meeting with a vote of no-confidence, they were to resign immediately. The Administration could afford to appear conciliatory. There was no chance whatever of a Wakefieldian ministry surviving. The result would be a reversion to formal executive control and the old officials would rest undisturbed until imperial instructions were received. Swainson's skill had not diminished.

It now remained to find four men foolish enough to take office. Tentative overtures to Weld and Sewell were rejected with some contempt. 'I expect Wakefield is at the bottom of this', Weld wrote. 'He wished to come to terms with us two on our first resignation.'

Of course neither then nor now would I enter in any way even into communication with him. In fact I have 'cut him'. I think that the best thing for this country is to raise the standard of public morality by shewing that a public man cannot be guilty of the political profligacy and private falsehood & deception for political ends like E G Wakefield has without losing caste & being cut however powerful a political ally he might be.

44. ibid., 26 August. This manoeuvre had a successful Canadian precedent. In 1843 Sir Charles Metcalfe, acting on Gibbon Wakefield's advice, had followed a clash with the Legislature by the formation of a minority ministry and an immediate appeal to the country. Stuart, p.196. For details, see Lloyd-Prichard, pp.51, 723-52.

45 Swainson, pp. 350-1.

46. Weld Journal 1854, 27 August.
Another suggestion, that he should take office with Forsaith, met with a similar response. "I think whoever proposes such a scheme must think me a fool or mad or both." A number of other members, including Aucklanders, were also approached but all refused. In the last analysis the majority preferred Swainson's manipulation of Wynyard to Wakefield's.

Finally four members of the minority formed a coalition: Forsaith, W. L. Travers from Nelson, 'an attorney of the dirtiest kind', Jerningham Wakefield, and James Macandrew. Known to posterity as the 'clean shirt ministry', they were in Weld's opinion a most miserable set, not one of them with the feeling of a gentleman. Gibbon Wakefield was their unacknowledged head.

Wynyard opened the second session on 31 August by an 'unconstitutional claptrap demagogical speech' which proposed the introduction of Wakefield's working-settler scheme and pandered to Auckland separatist agitation. Some of the measures outlined Weld recognised as good bills drawn from all sides of the House, but the speech also contained 'the most wonderful anticonstitutional theories, setting aside the Constitution Act, setting aside both genl. and provl. Councils, and appealing to the electors to know whether the Governor shd. dissolve the provl. councils etc. etc.'

47. ibid., 29 August.
48. ibid., 30 August.
49. Weld to Godley, 24 September 1854, pp.179-80.
50. Weld Journal 1854, 31 August.
When the ministers announced themselves to the House on 1 September, they refused all information as to their arrangements with the old officials and would assume no responsibility for Wynyard’s speech which, FitzGerald correctly surmised, they had actually written. The disgust of the House was unmistakable. A vote of no-confidence was carried, 22:10: Wynyard refused to grant a dissolution; and the minority resigned after an inglorious two days in office.

Weld viewed events with some sense of foreboding. It seemed that nothing would be accomplished now. Members would not stay beyond a few days. The future was uncertain.

We are trying to get through some necessary bills to pass a waste lands bill as a temporary measure to keep the land out of the hands of the Governor who threatens in his message to give them away during the recess (we fear Wakefield will still secretly govern him). As to estimates we have agreed that it is better to grant them to the old executive than to take the most extreme measures for carrying out our views-I think had we refused to grant supplies that we shd. have made a martyr of the Governor and perhaps not have been backed up sufficiently well by the Colony in an attempt to prosecute, if full responsible Govt. is refused next session we shd. be better able to take strong measures—at present we have contented ourselves with a resolution...that in case we are not asked for supplies—we will prosecute those who may put their hands in the public purse.... The last few days then we have sadly/ with our hopes for the future of a good honest central government for N.Zealand based on sound principles, much weakened/ tried to pass some necessary measures From the minority we have met the most factious opposition, trying to talk agnst time on adjournments etc.etc. — how it will end I hardly know—but things look badly.

---

52. FitzGerald to Selse, 17 September 1854, Selse MSS., I, No.111; NE, 17 January 1855, p.4c.
Despite Weld's pessimism a considerable amount of legislation was passed by the House during the final two weeks of the session as Sewell galvanised his fellow representatives into action; his 'powers of work were literally amazing'. But haste bred confusion, measures were often ill-considered, voting haphazard. Weld found himself agreeing with some proposals in principle yet voting against them owing to the speed with which they were drawn up.

The session ended on 16 September. Most of the southerners scrambled thankfully aboard the waiting steamer; Weld and Stuart Wortley escaped overland. After paddling up the Waikato, camping out at Rotomahana, 'floating lazily along the inland sea of Taupo' and shooting the Wanganui rapids, they rode gaily into Wellington, and at the end of October, Weld returned at last to Flaxbourne. Bowen, waiting impatiently for his friend to appear in Lyttleton, was forced to contain his curiosity for some time since Weld delayed at the Wairau in order to address his constituents.

In a lengthy letter he outlined the principal events of the session, explaining his standpoint on various issues. He made no attempt to disguise his disillusionment with the outcome of

55. FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1854, p.454.
56. PD, 1854-5, pp.386, 390-7, 414, 435; Weld Journal 1854, 8-15 September; FitzGerald to Godley, 23 April 1855, pp.452-3; Stuart, pp.204-5.
57. Weld to Charlotte Godley, 12 January 1855, Kilbracken MSS., II, pp.189-90; Lovat, pp.94-99 for a detailed account of the journey.
58. Bowen to Godley, 16 October 1854, Kilbracken MSS., I, p.103.
the attempt to secure responsible government but, he stressed, 'in this struggle we have learnt to know ourselves and one another'. 59 This in itself was no small achievement: it was in fact the most valuable legacy of the first session of New Zealand's General Assembly because for the next three decades, personality, not party policy, would be the core around which parliamentary factions would coalesce.

The events of this first session were to have far-reaching effects both on the leading personalities involved and on the future development of colonial and provincial politics. The abortive effort to secure responsible government fostered the growth of ultra-provincialism: it did not create this feeling any more than had Grey's method of implementing the constitution 'wrong end foremost'. 60 Provincialism in New Zealand was the natural outgrowth of dispersed settlement, poor communications and a considerable degree of economic self-sufficiency and, as D.G. Herron has clearly demonstrated, existed in the colony before the elections to the provincial and general legislatures were held, before it was known which body would assemble first. 61 The inclination towards strong provincial government was natural, given the geographic difficulties of establishing a centralised administrative control over the whole of New Zealand. Even so, it was the failure to secure responsible government together with the absence of any strong pressure for centralisation which

59. NE, 17 January 1855, p.4a-d. The address was dated 8 November 1854.

60. W. Fox to Godley, 8 March 1854, Kilbracken MSS., VII, p. 696.

61. D.G. Herron, 'The circumstances and effects of Sir George Grey's delay in summoning the first New Zealand General Assembly', Historical Studies, 9, 32 (May 1959), 364-82.
strengthened the tendency amongst colonial politicians to make the provincial legislatures the principal source of effective control.

Before 1854 a considerable amount of confusion existed as to the legitimate powers of the provincial authorities. They had legislated as they saw fit on matters of local concern but clearly looked to the first session of the General Assembly both to clarify their competence and, as with waste lands, to authorise an extension of their powers. At Auckland in 1854 the elected representatives had had their most favourable opportunity to establish the limits of provincial jurisdiction, to define the meaning of 'local self-government' (which imperial legislators had left obscure), to set up some code regularising the legislation already passed, to systematise the relations between the provincial assemblies and the general government. It was with these objectives in mind that FitzGerald, Sewell and Weld had acted. Their defeat and its aftermath made a mockery of the General Assembly. It was to be one year before Parliament reassembled, two years before responsible government was introduced and colonial politics began to take on some semblance of order. In the interim many leading colonists, disillusioned with one failure and dubious of future success, turned to local bodies where they could at least legislate in an effective if not always advisable manner. Only during this period, from the ending of the 1854 session to the beginning of that of 1856, did the provincial authorities really begin to encroach beyond the limits of their rightful powers.

Clearly the labels of provincialist and centralist must be attached with considerable caution and always with a recognition of their connotation at different times during the provincial period of New Zealand politics, 1852–76. In the first half of the 1850s,
provincialism and centralism were but variations on a provincialist theme; virtually every politician in the country was a provincialist of sorts; they differed only in their degree of extremism. Ultra-provincialists veered in the direction of federalism, some even to the point of separation. Their objective was the unchallenged supremacy of the provincial councils. The centralist objective was to ensure that the constitutional supremacy of the General Assembly was recognised, upheld and exercised if and when necessary to restrain provincial legislators should they overstep the boundaries of their legitimate concern. Centralists in this period did not advocate the abolition of provincial institutions; they saw the two bodies as complementary. Although the implementation of responsible government began the process, not until the 1870s was centralism a coherent political alternative to provincialism.

As Herron has warned, the attitudes expressed by individuals towards the relative powers of the central and provincial assemblies were not infrequently a reflection of their own position on the provincial political scene. Wakefield’s opposition to provincial (and therefore Superintendent Featherston’s) control of the waste lands being an obvious case in point. Much more moderate and consistent was the centralism of men who had chosen deliberately to stand for the central instead of a provincial body. When Weld declared himself a centralist he was giving voice to a personal and political belief that remained unaltered during and after his time in New Zealand, namely, that the interests of the colony as a whole were of far more importance.

than the interests of any one province. Federalism and separatism were to him intolerable solutions to the problems of colonial administration and government. The fiasco of 1854 reinforced rather than undermined this attitude. Though he was prepared to concede that the provincial assemblies now had to play the leading role in passing and implementing legislation essential for matters of local concern, this predominance Weld regarded as strictly temporary. The supremacy of the General Assembly was in no way to be challenged by an extravagant extension of provincial powers. Once responsible government was inaugurated and order restored at the centre, then New Zealand's political development would proceed along the lines originally intended by imperial legislators.

The establishment of representative institutions in New Zealand was not simply a politically unsettling process; it was also, as Weld's experience illustrated, a socially disruptive one. The question of securing representatives for instance: given the time, expense and transport problems involved, the wonder was not that so many M.H.R.'s were elected unopposed but rather that they were willing to stand at all. The colonial political circle was small, its members dispersed; few had the means and leisure to participate with ease in public affairs and for the majority of representatives their difficulties were aggravated by the Assembly's meeting in Auckland. Southern businessmen and farmers found it costly and tedious to be away from their concerns for an indefinite period, while for the latter there was the added uncertainty of the season in which the session would be held. Few of the southerners relished the prospect of being away from their home and family for months on end though, if Fanny FitzGerald's experience was any warning, the alternative of accompanying one's
husband to Auckland could have distinct disadvantages - such as
cooking for a legion of southern M.H.R.'s. These representa-
tives disliked the worry and expense of finding suitable
accommodation in Auckland; they also found northern society
snobbish and uncongenial - the military excepted in Weld's view.
Such personal prejudices exacerbated the rivalry extant between
Aucklanders and men from the Wakefieldian settlements, as
debates on the location of the seat of government tended to reveal.

Wakfield's dominance in the first session of the General
Assembly was a revealing commentary on the essentially amateur
status of contemporary politicians, few, if any, of whom had had
any previous experience to equip them for their new role. No
doubt lobbying and intrigue would soon have been part of the
normal workings of parliament with or without Wakefield, but
with him there, the parliamentary tios had an opportunity of
observing a past master of the art. For Weld the instance of
seeing how much harm one or two men could do to a country filled
him with a sense of mission; he had now found a purpose in
New Zealand - the thwarting of Gibbon Wakefield.

Weld's own reputation had in fact been considerably enhanced
by his few months in Auckland. Leading representatives were
unanimous in regarding him as fit for ministerial office and for the
most part he had justified their confidence. He had had the mental
stimulus he craved, the experience he desired; he had been

63. Fanny FitzGerald to Vaux, 20 August 1854.
64. Weld to Scrope, 14 August 1854; Bowen to Godley, 8 November
    1854, Kilbracken MSS., I, p.117.
65. Weld to Maria Weld, 31 July 1854.
'reduced to nose & whiskers'\textsuperscript{66} by the pressures of office. He had improved as a speaker\textsuperscript{67} and gained in self-assurance, though he confessed with refreshing candour: 'I often laughed in my sleeve at my own official grandeur & diplomatic reserve'\textsuperscript{68}. Weld still had a great deal to learn, however. His honesty had earned him trust and respect but, combined with a considerable degree of idealism and naivety, it also made him dogmatic and disinclined to compromise - not often the hallmarks of a successful politician.

\textsuperscript{66} Bowen to Godley, 16 October 1854, p.103.
\textsuperscript{67} NE, 23 August 1854, p.4b.
\textsuperscript{68} Weld to Scrope, 14 August 1854.
'Site of (intended) Town of Waitohi (P.S. now Picton), Queen Charlotte Sound, 1858'

'Lake Rotomahana' /1854/
CHAPTER VII

ITINERANT POLITICIAN: 1855–64

A hot sultry Christmas at Flaxbourne evoked memories of real English celebrations in good old country houses, of tenants' balls 'where even I used to dance the night right out', of bare wintry trees, tufts of snow on the holly and the laurels, of village smoke curling up coldly in the distance. But the prospects of another trip home were now uncertain, for Clifford, having lost his father some months previously, had just received news of his mother's death and was awaiting further details before he decided whether his presence in England was necessary.2

Weld remained at Flaxbourne for some weeks to be within easy communication of Clifford in Wellington; then could stand the enforced inaction no longer.3 The Nelson provincial government accepted his offer to search for a more direct route to Canterbury,4 and he succeeded in mapping a course via the head of the Wairau gorge which shortened the distance by some 130 miles and brought Christchurch within six days' travelling from Nelson.5 After staying some time at Stonyhurst Weld finally made Lyttleton, much to Bowen's delight. 'I never more

2. ibid., p.185.
4. Stafford to Weld, 12 March 1855, NP 11/1, No 55/65, p.224, NA. The sum agreed upon was £100.
5. 'Report of an Expedition with a View to the Discovery of a Direct Line of Route between Nelson and Canterbury', NE, 2 June 1855, p.3c-e. See NZS, 10 June 1856, p.3d-e for a letter from George Duppa correcting the nomenclature of two streams, but commending the route as one which could be travelled all year round.
cordially agreed with anyone than I do with him in his whole
train of thought on all political subjects, indeed on almost all
subjects', Bowen informed Godley. 'He is a thorough Don
Quixote in his determination to make no compromise and to
swerve neither to the right nor the left from what he considers
the right line of policy.' Since Bowen by his own admission
had been taking a strong stand in the Lyttelton Times against the
'ultra-provincial tendency of our politics', it is clear that
Weld's desire to see New Zealand governed as a coherent whole
remained unchanged.

Even more apparent is that Weld's political disillusionment
had reinforced growing personal dissatisfaction with his life in
New Zealand. Colonisation was losing all attraction; the
possibility of active service in the Crimean War presented an
exciting alternative. He weighed up the situation in a letter
to Charles.

I have a great mind to return home. I do not want to
become a stranger to England & to you - and moreover
I see a possibility I fear it is but a bare possibility,
of getting out to the war .... Having always had a
military employment as the dearest wish of my heart -
prepared by a life of hardship & to some extent of
adventure to privations danger & necessary self
reliance I think I should not be out of my element in
the Crimea - God has given me too restless a mind to
remain doing nothing in New Zealand during the best

6. Bowen to Godley, 25 April 1855, Kilbracken MSS., I,
p.35.

7. Bowen to Godley, 31 March 1855, ibid., I, p.129. See
also Bowen to Godley, 16 February 1855, ibid., I, p.122:
'Weld is a first rate fellow I can agree with him on all
political points better than with anyone else in NZ.'
years of my life. I sometimes think of your ideas about a coming struggle between anarchy & order even in England & a little military experience might be useful in such a case. At all events it would be the saving of me if I had something to which I could devote myself body & mind - I do not now find this in New Zealand, and I cannot find interest in doing that which could go on without me, here, and indeed colonizing, exciting enough in its early struggles becomes very milk & waterish when it resolves itself into merely going certain rounds to visit sheep stations and staying a week in this settlement & a week in that - the tone too of the Colony alters, there are new faces & mercenary ideas, different from those of the adventurers of the early days - friends too get sick or get disgusted - die or go away.

Although he was now in a financial position to gratify the 'wish of his life' there was yet, he admitted, one thing which might bind him awhile to New Zealand, the fact that he was looked to by many as a man to take the lead should responsible government be conceded. This possibility he viewed with mixed feelings.

The state of the Govt is so bad both as to administra-
tion & finance & has been so much worse ... in the last few months that a better head than mine is needed. I know no credit could be gained at it - besides it is not certain that I could command a majority except by coalescing with men who are mere self interested politicalings & whom I wont join. Yet in case of need if I am found to be able to carry on the Govt by pursuing a straightforward & manly line - then I might possibly feel bound in duty to undertake it .... As soon as the Assembly has met I shall be able to tell whether or no I can be of use politically here - I doubt it much - but if without deserting a duty I can leave New Zealand for a while I probably shall early in 1856 If I dont go to England I shall travel about or do something or other.

8. Weld to Charles Weld, 24 May 1855.
Events moved more swiftly than Weld had envisaged. Clifford and Weld sub-leased Flaxbourne for two and a half years, an arrangement which pleased Weld immensely. He had been increasingly critical of Clifford's interference in the station's management and had advocated letting the stations to a competent and hard-working man who would bear all expenses and be paid by a share of the profits. Moreover Clifford decided to return to England in 1858 to put his children to school. All of this meant, Weld considered, that unless he left the colony now, he would have no opportunity of doing so for some years. Little could be gained from staying even though responsible government had been granted.


10. While at Stonyhurst in May, Weld calculated that he should have a dividend of £800-£1000 coming to him. From now on he anticipated an annual cash income of £500 at least, rising yearly, while the value of both stock and landed property should also increase steadily. 'Yet did I sell out now I certainly could not net above 8000£. I find that our principal station, Flaxbourne, is more expensive than it ought to be, partly because there are two or three of us that have a say in its management & I consider Clifford to be an essentially bad businessman, being a man of small views, & of too sanguine a temperament.' Yet for a number of reasons Weld was not prepared to take over the entire management himself, particularly since he felt that Clifford would still want to interfere. 'I dont wish to separate from Clifford the size of our business gives us great advantages and we are a power in New Zealand.' Weld to Charles Weld, 24 May 1855.

11. Weld to Godley, 3 June 1855, Kilbracken MSS., II., p.191.
I do not think that the fight that must sooner or later come off between the provincialists and the centralists ought to be forced on this session as my presence may help to force it on - Any ministry that will at all rub on should be supported. I do not however think I am bound to give up my own plans to remain in the Colony to form one of such a ministry as that, whose chief design would be able to temporize. In fact if I am of any use to the Colony I shall be as useful two or three years hence as now, I think more so - and I think a Colonist ought not to lose a chance of occasionally mingling with the large world lest he become narrowed to one circle of ideas. 12

Weld's decision to travel was a wise one. Owing largely to the delay in issuing the writs, the session of 1855 was but sparsely attended, the representatives present doing little other than sanctioning the estimates for the following year. Concerning constitutional matters there was tacit agreement to await the arrival of the new Governor, Thomas Gore Browne, who had formal instructions to introduce a system of responsible government that would give the elected representatives full authority to legislate on matters of internal concern, save certain exceptions, such as native policy. These, together with matters of imperial interest, were reserved to the Governor and the London authorities. The fight which Weld had predicted had not yet come.

Together with Stuart Wortley, Weld left New Zealand in August, his itinerary for the journey home including Tahiti, Valparaiso, Panama, Mexico, Cuba, New York, Canada and Halifax, a 'jolly programme', thought Bowen enviously. 13 And certainly a visit to Tahiti was a far more interesting experience than another sojourn in Auckland would ever have been. Weld was fascinated by the island and its people. The native women

12. ibid., p.192.
13. ibid., Bowen to Godley, 27 July 1855, I, p.156.
in their loose muslins and calicos, their hair entwined with the most beautiful wreaths or decorated with a single flower, gave the place quite the look of Mahomet's paradise, he informed Stafford. Tahitian women Weld found more graceful and prettier than their Maori counterparts, more tasteful in their dress. The men he thought less powerfully built than the native New Zealanders, graver and more taciturn. 'They, like I think all the South Sea Islanders, want firmness & force of character & are not capable of any long continued or deep impressions, they are civil & obliging, mild & easily led.'

His knowledge of Maori enabled him to be understood in Tahiti and he noted with interest that many Maori words were now old-fashioned or obsolete in the islands. Given the limited range of Weld's vocabulary, the accuracy of this observation seems debatable.

From Tahiti the travellers took passage for San Francisco, hoping to touch at the Sandwich Islands in order to see Mauna Loa in eruption. Weld's curiosity was more than satisfied when in November 1855 he ascended the active volcano, not an unprecedented feat, but a difficult and dangerous one.

On reaching England early in 1856 (too late for the Crimea) Weld quickly settled back into the familiar routine of visits, yachting, shooting, hunting and racing, yet found himself

14. Weld to Stafford, 27 September 1855, Stafford MSS., F.47, No.16.
impatient for details of political developments in New Zealand. News of Sewell's accession to office reached him only through the press and he chided Stafford for failing to supply a 'behind the scenes history of things'. Weld was anxious that the ministry should stand but did not think Sewell's task would be easy, given the strength of 'settlement feeling'. 'I do hope the people of New Zealand will feel that their credit is at stake & that if they allow petty jealousies to upset a govt & render responsible Govt impossible it will seriously lower the character of the Colony.' He returned to New Zealand on New Year's Day 1858, avowedly as much against ultra-provincialism as ever.

In June of that year, following the resignation of William Wells, member for Waitau, Weld was elected to his former seat in the House. In this session he played a minor role. He sat on a number of committees; opposed the proposed secret ballot as 'un-English'; challenged a comment that he was a 'Conservative'; and declared himself against government by 'fictitious or mushroom aristocracies' and wholeheartedly in favour of government based on democracy - provided it represented all classes, interests, and opinions, and was as stable and as conservative as possible. In short, Weld's occasional remarks during his brief attendance at this session were more a record of his presence than a significant contribution to the discussions. Possibly his reticence was a sign that he

---

17. ibid., Weld to Stafford, 8 January 1858, No.18.
18. NE, 29 May 1858, p.2e.
19. PD, 1856-8, p.600.
20. PD, 1858-60, p.13.
21. NE, 28 August 1858, p.4e for Weld's address to his constituents, written 20 July 1858, explaining his standpoint on the principal issues of this session.
felt out of touch with political developments over the previous two years: the truth might simply be that Weld had lost enthusiasm for colonial politics.

Although few fragments survive from this period of Weld's life, his movements alone point to the years 1855-9 as being a time of considerable personal uncertainty. Now more than ever he was in need of that someone 'for whom I care and who cares for me'. Ten years earlier Weld had dismissed the implication of that comment with an airy aside; now at thirty-five, well-established and financially secure, he could no longer deny his desire for marriage. In one respect, however, the situation had not changed. The colonial Catholic circle was still too small. In the spring of 1858 he returned again to England and this time attained his objective when on 3 March 1859 he married Filumena, eldest daughter of Ambrose de Lisle Phillipps and Laura (née Clifford) of Grace-Dieu Manor and Garendon Park, Leicestershire.22 Warmly welcomed by both families,23 the match cemented existing ties since Weld's mother-in-law was also his cousin, once removed, on his mother's side.24 Weld himself thought he had done rather well. As he observed shortly after his engagement: 'I have indeed been a lucky fellow in making such fast running taking lawyers & all such obstacles flying.'25

Marriage transformed Weld. From now on he was to be much more self-assured, much more positive in his approach.

25. Weld to Joseph Weld, 26 February /1859/, Weld MSS., D10/C310, DRO.
He was utterly devoted to his wife and she to him; she believed in him implicitly, perhaps too uncritically for his own good. A gentle retiring creature, noted for her extreme piety, Mena ably filled the roles of confidante and counsellor for the next thirty-two years. She was to bring Weld great happiness in their lifetime and bore him thirteen children, twelve of whom survived.

The Welds arrived in the colony in February 1860, coming back to a country poised on the brink of war. Within weeks Weld had announced his intention of joining the Stafford ministry, a move which might well have been arranged during Stafford's visit to England in 1859, and one which allayed the fears of friends and constituents that the near-fatal attack of typhoid fever which Weld had suffered shortly after his marriage had rendered him too weak for further political involvement.

Clearly there has been considerable changes since Weld first sat in the General Assembly. The chaos and uncertainty which surrounded the first sessions of parliament had given way, after the fall of the Sewell and Fox ministries in 1856, to a period of comparative calm and stability under the auspices of Stafford, Whitaker, C.W. Richmond and, from 1858, H.J. Tancred. This stability in turn made possible the clarification of provincial-general government relations, particularly over finance. The '1856 Compact' regularised financial arrangements, the revenue from land sales, subject to certain provisos, being given to the provinces. In addition not less than three-eighths of the gross customs revenue was allocated to provincial exchequers. Initially these measures gave the provinces the security they

26. NE, 4 April 1860, p.3e. Mena Weld to A. de Lisle Phillipps, n.d. /April 1859/, Weld MSS., D16/C59, DRO.
needed; eventually they were to exacerbate provincial rivalry and would prove an embarrassment to the colony at large when general government expenditure increased so disproportionately during the sixties.  

In the session of 1858 provincial authorities also obtained the means of controlling land policy. This measure was received with widespread approval — unlike the highly contentious New Provinces Act which made the creation of a new province virtually automatic on receipt of a petition signed by three-fifths of the residents in an outlying district, and which could be strongly criticised on several grounds. For example, the provincial council concerned had no power even to demand an investigation into the validity of a separation petition. Nor was there any question of evaluating each case on its individual merits. The furore and opposition which this measure aroused, especially amongst Wellington members who had been absent when the bill was carried, was to weaken the Government considerably. On balance, however, the Stafford ministry was relatively successful in resolving the confusion of provincial-general government competence, but in another sphere, on an issue of paramount importance to all in New Zealand, the Government was unable to make any headway.

29. Ibid., pp. 107-15 for an assessment of the Act and its effects.
The 1850s was a decade of deceptive tranquillity in Maori-pakeha relations. The sporadic fighting which had marred the first years of racial contact had died down, only to be replaced by a less tangible but far more formidable form of resistance to the advance of European settlement: emergent Maori nationalism. The same period which had seen the setting up of European political institutions also saw the growth of inter-tribal unity, fostered by the Ngatihaua chief, Wiremu Tamihana, culminate in the election of the revered Waikato warrior, Te Wherowhero, as the first Maori king in 1858.  

European reaction to the Maori King movement, the formal expression of this new sense of common identity amongst the native New Zealanders, was varied. Some dismissed it as a mere curiosity, others as an anti-land-selling conspiracy; more intelligent observers viewed the phenomenon as an adverse commentary on the ineffectiveness and inadequacy of European rule to cope with problems arising in Maori society. Few settlers perceived that less not more direct intervention was needed, that less not more association with Europeans was perhaps the only way of achieving racial harmony. Speedy amalgamation was the pakeha ideal, partial segregation the Maori need, and at this crucial phase of cultural contact, when the greatest care and forethought were vital in the formulation of a policy to meet the situation, the administration of native affairs was dangerously confused.


32. Ibid., pp.118-19; pp.120-30 for the background to the following three paragraphs. For a full analysis see Sinclair, Origins, pp.85-206.
Despite the concession of responsible government, control of native policy had remained an imperial responsibility. This was not an unreasonable retention of authority but Governor Thomas Gore Browne was completely incapable of handling it. In practice native policy was controlled by Donald McLean, Chief Land Purchase Commissioner under Grey and, from 1856, Native Secretary, a shrewd and able Scot whose methods of obtaining land became steadily less scrupulous as the European demand for cheap land intensified, and whose ideas on the nature of native policy were increasingly at variance with the opinions of the elected representatives. Try as they might the members of the House could not undermine Gore Browne's dependence on McLean.

The tragic consequences of this divided administration and lack of cooperation were apparent long before the outbreak of fighting in Taranaki. In 1858, for example, McLean effectively sabotaged Richmond's proposals for individualising land tenure, for extending Grey's system of resident magistrates in Maori districts, and, in accordance with ex-Native Secretary F.D.Fenton's advice, for introducing 'indirect rule' in the Waikato, the latter in Sinclair's opinion the most promising policy conceived in the colonial period. McLean apparently believed that the Maori King movement, if ignored by Government, would eventually disappear of its own volition. Such was not to be the case. In Taranaki also there was growing cause for concern, since the official policy of non-interference was proving totally inadequate as a means of settling inter-tribal feuds in that province, particularly in face of the local colonists' overt assistance to the minority 'land sellers'. Gore Browne's personal intervention in March 1859 precipitated conflict. Acting on the belief that illegitimate interference in land sales by non-owners was the principal source of dissension in the North Island, and ignorant of the most fundamental principles of
Maori land tenure, the Governor unwittingly repudiated the long-established mode of official land purchase by refusing to accept the right of a chief to speak for the entire tribe. The subsequent farcical investigation of title to the Waitara by McLean and local government purchase officer, Robert Parris, merely confirmed what Gore Browne and his advisers wished to believe, that Wiremu Kingi had no title to the land offered by Teira for sale. Interrupted surveys and a declaration of martial law heralded war.

Although the Nelson Examiner carried news of Weld's proposed accession to the ministry in an issue of early April, not until May did Weld provide his constituents with a statement of his aims. In this address he concentrated on what he felt to be the two great questions of the day: the native question 'and the even more important one of the ultimate form into which our institutions ... are to be moulded, or, as I prefer, to be allowed to resolve themselves'. For Weld the debate over the New Provinces Act was of greater moment than the situation at Waitara, a somewhat disturbing order of priority from a man who within months would hold the portfolio of native affairs.

The present difficulty at Taranaki, Weld maintained, was not in any way an issue of ownership of title to land; 'it is this: Can a chief who assumes tribal authority forbid the exercise of rights of ownership by a native owner of the land?' According to Weld, the quasi-sovereignty claimed by Kingi was incompatible with the authority of the Crown, and with the advance of civilisation among the Maoris themselves; it was antagonistic to the rights of private property, would lead to the perpetuation of communistic habits and would also ensure the
preponderance of mere strength over social or legal order. It was, moreover, detrimental to good relations and union between the races and to the present interests and the fulfilment of the high future destinies of New Zealand. The wisest and most humane course was now, once and forever, firmly to uphold and beyond dispute to establish the supremacy of the Crown. 33

The address received a wide coverage in the colonial press, being interpreted as a key to ministerial intentions, a sign that Stafford and his colleagues would take a hard line on native policy and provincial affairs. More than one commentator, however, doubted the wisdom of Weld's proceedings. The Nelson Examiner for instance questioned whether the situation at the Waitara was quite as clear-cut as Weld imagined; and noted with some concern that he had confounded two essentially separate points - the Queen's supremacy and the rights of chieftainship. 35 No longer under Bowen's restraining hand, the Lyttleton Times was more critical of Weld's limited understanding of the motives of those who opposed the New Provinces Act. He would have done himself and others better service if he had taken his place as the 'esteemed and independent member of old, than as the mere subordinate of a Ministry whose friends are numbered'. 36 Fox, bitter opponent of Stafford's domination, thought Weld foolish. 'The Stafford Ministry is tottering to its fall, and his adherence ... cannot strengthen it but will much

---

33. NE, 9 May 1860, p.2b. The address was dated 1 May 1860.
34. ibid., 16 May 1860, p.2b-c; 19 May 1860, p2d-e; LT, 23 May 1860, p.4c; 26 May 1860, p.4c; WL, 25 May 1860, p.3a-b; 1 June 1860, p.5f; HBH, 16 June 1860, p.1c-d.
35. NE, 30 May 1860, p.2f, p.3a-b; 6 June 1860, p.2b-c.
36. LT, 2 June 1860, p.4c-e.
damage him. 37

Yet, as his private comments at this time reveal, Weld had no doubts about the correctness of his views. His personal and public utterances were completely consistent, a fact worth illustrating in some detail for it is clear that Weld’s philosophy of native affairs was still based on his limited experience in the Wairarapa. He had little real appreciation of the marked changes in Maori society and attitudes in the intervening years and, as indicated by his address above, for one who claimed to know the Maoris and their ways, Weld was demonstrating a dangerous misunderstanding if not ignorance of principles fundamental to that society.

To his father-in-law, for instance, Weld commented:

Mena will have told you about the native insurrection at Taranaki. It is very unfortunate, and shews how difficult it is to civilize savages by the kindest & most just treatment which they certainly have received in N. Zealand. They believe that they are more powerful than the English but do not want to turn us out of the country but to establish a sovereignty of their own - they say we have taught them & now they are able to do as we do & govern themselves - it is the painful duty of the Government to resist this separate authority & division of empire especially when as at Taranaki it has been asserted by force of arms. The natives, were it possible to leave the islands to them, would be perfectly unable to defend themselves or to keep peace - and of course the Queens Govt cannot abdicate its authority so the only hope is in our being able to stop the native movement in the commencement. 38

A letter to John Robert Godley, written on the eve of departure

38. Weld to A.de Lisle Phillipps, 31 May 1860, Weld Papers, II, No. 3.
for the session at Auckland, is the most valuable testimony of all. It shows unmistakably the legacy of Weld's early bigotry against Protestant missionary endeavour in New Zealand and reflects the rigidity of attitude with which he viewed native affairs during his entire time in the colony.

Now for New Zealand matters - I will not go fully into the Taranaki affair there are such hundreds of canards about it such heaps of misstatements as to the real state of the case that I will only tell you now that the more facts come to light the more satisfied I am that the Governor has acted rightly throughout and has right and justice on his side ....

As to the 'Native King' question it was hoped that internal dissensions would cause it to die a natural death and indeed even now this is not unlikely as Potatau the Native King is just dead but recent events have obliged the Governor to take notice of it - as the Native Kings flag has been hoisted with great ceremony and many of his adherents had joined Wiremu Kingi at Taranaki in the field ....

It will be a sad thing if it comes to a war of races. I fear it will end in that unless we get a large force from home - indeed a native war would utterly ruin the Northern island as men will not remain in it merely to fight for any length of time but would re-emigrate when their property was destroyed which unless we achieve a great success soon would be consequent on a general rising in the case of outlying districts. The present Native movement is quite different from former ones it is much more universal and much more intelligent and is founded on a thorough contempt for the weakness of the British Government which has been growing for years - It will be very unfair if Governor Gore Browne is blamed for this Shortland Fitzroy and Grey are the real men answerable Grey patched up a peace left the Queens flagstaff prostrate at Kororarika when he made peace with Heki who cut it down and this is the result. In my opinion there is no alternative between large support from England and the ruin of the Northern Island and it would be better to give up the N.Iland at once
than adopt half measures which will only tend to make
the blow and ruin more complete when it comes a little
later ....

I really feel for the Natives they have been
ruined by a maudlin pseudo philanthropy. Had they
been treated with firmness and justice combined, they
might have been saved but they have been undone by
their friends. At all events the Colonists are innocent
of this. The Native blood lies at the door of Exeter Hall. 39

Such expressions of ignorance and prejudice were by no
means unique but Weld would soon be in a political position to
legislate according to these beliefs.

Stafford and his colleagues had no easy task retaining
office for the duration of the final session of the second New
Zealand parliament. 40 Native policy and the New Provinces
Act were, as anticipated, the principal points of contention,
and resolutions vindicating Gore Browne's stand on the Waitara
purchase and advocating a vigorous prosecution of the war
soon revealed the strength of opposition feeling. 41 Richmond,
Native Minister and Colonial Treasurer, bore the brunt of
attack; while Weld as minister without portfolio was responsible
only for occasional measures such as a representation bill and
an amendment to a militia act. 42 He therefore had a much less

40. Morrell, pp.118-20; Wood, Chapter VI, passim.
41. PD, 1858-60, pp.321-45. See also the debate on the first
reading of the Native Offenders Bill, ibid., pp.178-207,
209-30. Weld to Mena Weld, 4 August 1860, Weld Papers,
II, No.5. Note also Weld to Mena Weld, 9 August 1860,
ibid., II, No.6: "I do not take a gloomy view of the future
as some people do as to native matters. As yet I can't
guess how long this session may be - I think the ministry
are rather gaining ground however."
42. PD, 1858-60, pp.512-3, 767-8.
onerous task than his associates, a point which did not escape comment in the highly critical Wellington press.\textsuperscript{43}

The ministry survived until Parliament was dissolved on 5 November largely owing to the disparate nature of the opposition;\textsuperscript{44} also because a sufficient number of members who were opposed to the Government's stand on provincial affairs were prepared nevertheless to support its native and war policies.\textsuperscript{45}

Shortly after the Assembly dispersed, Richmond resigned the portfolio of native affairs to Weld. The move did not portend any marked change of policy since Weld had applauded Richmond's proposals in 1858\textsuperscript{46} and felt himself in accord with the latter's objectives ever since. Moreover a change of personnel was, for practical purposes, of little significance, native policy still being essentially an imperial not a colonial responsibility. And on the central issue of the war Weld too was all in favour of its vigorous prosecution. Far better to lose all than to remain as they were; this was the attitude which he had supported during the session\textsuperscript{47} and to which he consistently adhered.

Early in the New Year, however, it looked as if Richmond might have the portfolio returned, for in February 1861 Weld lost his seat. The defeat was basically of his own making. Although

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{43} WI, 9 October 1860, p.3e-f; 13 November 1860, p.3d for an opinion that Weld would never rise above the level of a third-rate man.
\item \textsuperscript{44} NE, 10 November 1860, p.2f.
\item \textsuperscript{45} Sinclair, Origins, pp.211-12.
\item \textsuperscript{46} See above, footnote 21.
\item \textsuperscript{47} PD, 1858-60, p.335.
\end{itemize}
he was in the Cook Strait area in December before going on to Canterbury, so accustomed was he to uncontested elections that Weld apparently took his position for granted and failed to intimate his willingness to stand for re-election. News that one W.H. Eyes was canvassing the Wairau brought Weld somewhat belatedly to the scene, but not before a considerable number of voters—whether from confusion or conviction it is difficult to tell—had pledged their support to his opponent. Eyes' 65:61 victory was interpreted by southern commentators more as a criticism of the Stafford ministry's centralising tendencies than as a personal indictment of Weld and it did not mean a premature end to the latter's political career. Somewhat fortuitously the issue of the writ for Cheviot had been delayed; Weld was returned by a 3:1 margin for an electorate in which Stonyhurst employees could well have supplied a fair proportion of the thirty-one votes cast.

In March 1861 Weld accompanied Gore Browne, Whitaker and McLean to Taranaki, scene of the first inglorious phase of the Maori wars. The position there scarcely represented an unmistakable assertion of British supremacy. The command of Colonel C.E. Gold had not augured well for the reputation of imperial troops abroad; neither had the exploits of his successor, Major-General T.S. Pratt. To London observers the conduct of the war

48. NE, 11 January 1861, p.1c-d.
49. WI, 26 February 1861, p.5a; LT, 27 February 1861, p.4b-c; NE, 16 March 1861, p.2d.
50. Or '...conveniently kept back to provide against accidents', NZS, 23 February 1861, p.2e.
51. LT, 6 March 1861, p.4d; WI, 9 April 1861, p.5a.
52. TH, 30 March 1861, p.2a.
53. Sinclair, Origins, pp.228-9; Weld to Godley, 18 July 1860, p.196 for reference to Gold's 'utter and extreme incapacity'.
seemed an extraordinarily haphazard affair, a reasonably accurate assessment, since Gore Browne and his ministerial advisers were singularly lacking in constructive ideas either for waging war effectively or for securing peace. The compromise truce arranged in Taranaki in April 1861 was the achievement of McLean and Wiremu Tamihana; the minister for native affairs was not directly involved. Sewell, after spending some time in discussion with Weld, came away none the wiser as to government intentions, and memoranda extant from Weld's tenure of office indicate a paucity of ideas, dealing as they do with the individualisation of land titles and departmental administrative efficiency.

Three significant changes of personnel occurred in 1861: Duncan Cameron succeeded as Commander of the imperial troops; the Stafford government gave way to a ministry headed by Fox; and George Grey returned as Governor. A much more able individual than his predecessors, Cameron was initially in favour of vigorous campaigning to settle dispute quickly. For example, both he and Weld advocated punitive action against the Ngatiruanui in South Taranaki but Gore Browne refused his sanction, arguing that forces must be concentrated in Auckland in the event of their being needed against the Waikato. Less than four years later, Minister, Commander and Governor would again be in conflict over a policy for this self-same area - but for somewhat different reasons.

55. ibid., p.232.
57. Weld to J. Davis, 19 March 1861, No.128, p.165, MA 4/4, NA; Weld to McLean, 21 May 1861, McLean MSS., F.408, No.1, AT.
The Assembly met in June for what was to be an 'unsettled session'. While Fox's intention of proposing a vote of no confidence was clear from the outset, action on that score was delayed by a number of factors, not least of which were Weld's resolutions on native affairs.

In moving that the establishment of a sovereign authority independent of the British Crown was incompatible with the security of the colonists, the civilisation of the natives and the welfare of both races, Weld was expressing a belief shared by all but one, at most two, of the members present in the House. The second and third resolutions stated that it was the duty of the colony to support measures taken by the Imperial Government for the assertion of British sovereignty and for securing a lasting peace. If negotiations with the King movement should fail, the House would not shrink from the consequences of a resort to force. These proposals were amended to emphasize the financial liability of the Home authorities for the expenses of war (an amendment which Gore Browne was to return to the House for clarification).

Weld's speech accompanying these resolutions was a clear statement of the policy he would follow were he to retain office as minister for native affairs. Richmond's 1858 measures

60. ibid., pp.143-5; PD, 1861-3, p.64.
61. ibid., p.67.
62. ibid., pp.67-68; p.75, Message No.2. Wood, pp.146-54 for an analysis of the significance of the amendment and Gore Browne's reply.
63. PD, 1861-3, pp.64-67.
would be upheld: the Native Circuit Courts Act, the Native Districts Regulation Act, and the disallowed Native Territorial Rights Act, the latter in Weld’s view the most valuable proposal of all. Had the provisions of that Bill been carried out, Weld declared, there would have been none of the current difficulties over land purchase since a much better system, that of giving the Maoris power to individualise their titles in land, would have been inaugurated. (Ironically the principal reason for the British Government’s rejection of the measure had been the fear that official interference in native title would involve the danger of war if government decisions on those titles were resisted.)

Want of money was one of the two principal difficulties with which the government had to contend according to Weld; money for introducing local self-government in native districts, for rewarding loyal Maoris for public services rendered, for medical assistance in native hospitals, for the establishment of agricultural colleges, the formation of roads and the employment of surveyors to meet the demand for the individualisation of title on which issue, Weld assured the House, he was constantly receiving letters from natives from all parts of the country. But these remarks, the minister owned, he made chiefly with regard to those tribes who were still loyal.

The other great difficulty in Weld’s opinion was the want of cooperation on the part of the natives themselves. Amongst those tribes whose disaffection was increasing day by day, the distrust of Europeans was such that Weld could now see only one honourable course to take. If members were carried away by ‘maudlin sentiment for nationalities’, he concluded, ‘it would really entail the ruin of the Native race and the ruin also of the colony for many years to come; and then, in allowing

64. Sinclair, Origins, p. 98.
ourselves to be carried away by such sentiments we should be abandoning our duties as subjects of the Queen and members of a colony with a free Constitution'.

But though a majority of members shared Weld's attitude and were prepared to adopt a modified version of his resolutions, they were not prepared to tolerate a further period of Stafford domination. Fox's deferred motion of no confidence finally came up for debate on 3 July; after a three-day airing of grievances Fox and his cohorts defeated the Government 24:23. A political turning-point had been reached. The comparative stability which had marked the four previous sessions would now be replaced by a period in which frequent ministerial change was the dominant feature. Now too a change of both ministry and governor offered some hope that new means might be tried of resolving the current impasse of Maori-pakeha relations. And for Weld personally the political reverse was probably fortunate. It is unlikely that he could have worked well with Grey in 1861, particularly in view of the latter's determination to retain actual control of native affairs while ministers shouldered the responsibility for his decisions.

If Weld's second term of office was longer lasting than his first, it was nevertheless equally ineffective, though this appraisal should perhaps be tempered by recognising the anomalous constitutional position of the minister for native affairs, and also by acknowledging the unlikelihood of his making any impression upon the direction of events or upon the electorate out of session. Weld's understanding of the Maori was limited.

65. ibid., pp.103-17, 117-51, 154-68; Wood, pp.154-61.
his native policy uninspired, yet the same criticism — or worse — could be levelled against practically every member of the House. Weld's attitude was at least consistent and based on sincere conviction, not political expediency. He genuinely believed that a firm hand and just rule was all that was required to solve the problems of racial contact. His major fault lay in being unable to adapt his simplistic European-oriented philosophy to meet changing Maori needs. After seventeen years' association with the colony he had still failed to appreciate the contradiction implicit in his formula: as the Waitara dispute had shown, a firm assertion of British rule was not always compatible with true justice to Maori interests.

En route to Canterbury in November 1861 Weld reflected on Grey's prospects of attaining peace. While recognising the Governor's 'great abilities', Weld doubted whether Grey could effect a complete pacification of the Maoris by bloodless means; 'he hopes to do so, and it must be every man's prayer that he may succeed'. 66 Weld for one remained pessimistic. But Maori affairs were now Grey's problem. Weld instead became immersed in designing a 'very commodious & nice looking' house for his new property of Brackenfield, a comparatively small estate (553 acres in 1864) some thirty miles north of Christchurch. 67

67. loc.cit. The initial purchase for Brackenfield was 304 acres in July 1861; a further 199 acres were bought between December 1861 and October 1863; the final 50 acres were secured in June 1864. During 1863 Weld also acquired 130 acres in the Christchurch survey district, apparently as a speculative venture, and by November 1864 he had a further 94 acres in the Rolleston area. I am indebted to Mr J. O. Wilson of the Canterbury Museum for assistance in locating information on Brackenfield, and to Mr J. Hayward, Department of Lands and Survey, Christchurch, for kindly supplying details of Weld's land buying in the period 1861-4.
This was to be the Welds' permanent home in New Zealand. Wakefield's gentleman farmer had at last found his colonial niche.

Having resolved to attack the racial problem by peaceful means Grey, with the reluctant collaboration of his ministerial advisers, drew up a scheme for the introduction of civil institutions amongst the Maoris. Sound in principle, it proved impracticable. The King Maoris were understandably too suspicious of the Governor's intentions and Grey's policy was, of necessity, ambivalent; he was at the same time preparing for war in case his peace overtures should fail. 68

The chance of a conciliatory native policy succeeding was further reduced when Parliament reassembled in July 1862. Of primary concern to members was the extent to which Fox and his colleagues had committed the colony to meet the cost of war and defence preparations. Native affairs had been an imperial responsibility; thus, colonial logic ran, the war was an imperial liability. Fox's attempts to evade the question with a resolution so vague as to be ridiculous 69 caused confusion, censure and resignation of the only men remotely inclined to support the Governor's methods.

Stafford had led the attack against Fox but declined to take office himself for he would then have been committed to upholding Grey's native policy. Weld was one of several others approached. He also refused, arguing that it would not be wise either for the good of the country or for the credit of his own political position to take office at that stage or while Grey

68. Rutherford, pp.455-9; pp.461-9 for Grey's attempts to implement his policy.

69. PD, 1861-3, p.436; M.Richmond to Gore Browne, 11 August 1862, Gore Browne MSS., 1/2f, No.135, NA.
was governor. Besides he had no desire to leave Brackenfield & indeed couldn't afford it now'. 70 Finally F. D. Bell and Alfred Domett were persuaded to take the lead, together with W. B. D. Mantell, T. Gillies, Tancred and Thomas Russell, a collection of 'business men sent without their asking to hold a post which t'others had deserted'. 71

This makeshift ministry was responsible for two important decisions. Firstly, in accord with the feeling of the House, Domett adamantly refused to accept ministerial responsibility for native affairs. Again members made clear their belief that since the present situation was the outcome of British maladministration, British authorities could both resolve and pay for it. The colonists would assist with such limited means as lay within their power. Secondly Bell's Native Lands Act was passed. This measure eliminated the principle of Crown pre-emption and undermined the whole basis of Grey's current runanga scheme. All land over which native title had not been extinguished was declared the absolute property of the persons entitled to it by Maori custom; there was provision for the creation of courts under European magistrates for determining the extent of tribal and individual properties, issuing certificates of title, and converting Maori titles into Crown grants; and direct sales by native owners to European purchasers was permitted. 72 From the Maori point of view it was a disastrous measure - but that was not the standpoint from which it was considered.

70. Weld to Mena Weld, 2 August 1862, Weld Papers, II, No. 8.
71. F. D. Bell to Gore Browne, 30 September 1862, Gore Browne MSS., 1/2g, No. 149.
Weld's private defence of the House's rejection of responsibility for native affairs is worth quoting at some length. It seems ingenuous. And so it was. But it is also the comment of a transparently honest and unsubtle politician: this is genuinely how the situation appeared to Weld and therefore an indication of how he thought it would appear to others.

Sir G Grey's view has been to throw responsibility of native affairs on the Colony, whilst he has the real power & must necessarily have it .... what nonsense to talk of our responsibility, it is a sham & I dont like shams. I told Sir G. Grey that my view of the position of the Colony to the natives was this. England had undertaken to save the native race by establishing her sovereignty over them, the Colonists never undertook anything of the sort nor would they be justified in so doing, as their undertaking it would merely lead to a struggle which would end in the extermination of the natives in the long run & the half ruin of the northern island colonists. No people has a right to assume a sovereignty over a country when it has not overwhelm-ing force to keep order & to back the policeman. The Colonists have not this. They never attempted it at the beginning, they will not attempt it now. They will be content to aid the Home Govt in the task the Home Govt has philanthropically undertaken & do their duty as loyal subjects, but if the Home Government gives up the native question the Colonists will then have to consider whether they must not draw a line round European districts, leaving it entirely to the English Govt or any other Govt that may think proper to assume the native protectorate to deal as they chose with the natives. I said to Sir George, supposing we take this position will the Home Govt allow France or America to assume the native protectorate or will they even give up the natives to the sway of escaped convicts, runaway sailors, with a dash of missionaries amongst them, and allow the settlers to treat with these neighbours, as an independent state declare war make alliances etc or will they in such a case have to send out entirely at their own expense a Governor for the natives, troops to support him etc. Sir George said this was a new way of putting the question & did not deny that it would be rather a poser.
Doubtless Grey wasted little time in thinking of a solution.

Weld continued:

I said simply that this session I did not intend to bring forward this view prominently but that I had alluded to the contingency in the House & in conversation & that we were (many of us) determined not to undertake duties which we could not properly perform though we held that the Colonists might be most usefully employed as agents of the Home Govt & might be trusted in that capacity in working native policy but that the real onus was on the hand of the Govt that had assumed the responsibility over natives who were not yet fit to join us in self govt & who repudiate the idea of accepting the institutions of a Government that they despise for weakness. As to native matters the universal opinion is that they are in a very bad way .... Nobody really believes in Sir G Grey's success. We are powerless however to do anything else, & we generally feel that whilst there is the remotest chance of his success it would be unpatriotic to destroy that chance whilst hope remains by hostile criticism, consequently little was said in the Assembly - we were all sick of the Assembly I openly said that I 'loathed the cant' which was talked by some upon native matters not ten men in NZ believing it in their hearts & those who knew most about the matter & were honest being silent or saying little, feeling how the Colony has been checkmated by the Home Govt & how really powerless it is to do anything. I believe the opinion is now universal that the future of the native race has been ruined utterly by its supposed friends....

Weld was hopeful that the present ministry would stand.

Bell and Domett in particular he thought had 'come out wonderfully' since taking office.

Stafford & myself putting aside private reasons had agreed on public grounds that we ought not to go into a ministry. We could not have given Grey's 'policy' a fair trial as we dont believe or profess belief in it & besides nearly half the House would have been against the old 'war ministry' !! as if a man amongst us
ever wished for war except when the price of peace was dishonour to the Crown & country, ruin to the natives in the long run, not to speak of great temporary injury to the Colony as will be seen in a year or two if not before. 73

By the beginning of 1863 it was obvious that the uneasy truce would not last for much longer. Neither race professed faith in Grey's peace-keeping policy. Taranaki settlers demanded the return of land still held by Maoris near Tataraimaka; Aucklanders were impatient to open up the rich Waikato - Waipa hinterland; the King Maoris too made their position clear. They would resist any attempt by Grey either to extend his road building over the Waikato river or to occupy Tataraimaka without first giving back the Waitara. For his part Grey was increasingly determined to resolve the current impasse - by force if necessary. Disregarding the Kingites' warning he effected a peaceful reoccupation of Tataraimaka in April and only then was the disputed title to the Waitara re-examined. This time Wiremu Kingi's claims were unmistakably upheld. Yet though Grey justly resolved to return the land, he was determined to avoid the responsibility for such an unpopular action, and only after a fortnight's argument were Domett and his cabinet persuaded to authorise the Governor's decision. In the meantime the two-year truce had been broken. 74

Weld's response to Grey's action in Taranaki was fully in accord with his previous comments. A report in the Press that the Waitara had 'been given up to the Natives' Weld interpreted as meaning: 'The loyal natives have been given up to their

73. Weld to Gore Browne, 4 October 1862, Gore Browne MSS., 1/2f, No.136.
enemies, and the district to anarchy. But what perturbed
Weld most of all was the way in which the so-called new facts -
for example, that the 1860 investigation had been incomplete,
that many Maoris had disputed Teira's title, that Wiremu Kingi's
opposition was based on occupation as well as on the right of
a chief - were being exploited by Grey to enhance his reputation
at the expense of his predecessor's. Weld was determined
that Gore Browne's honour would not be tarnished. That decision
made, nothing, not even the probability of confrontation with
Grey himself, was likely to deter Weld from seeking to attain
his objective when the Assembly next met.

The 1863 session has achieved deserved notoriety in
New Zealand political history, less for the defeat of the Domett
cabinet and its replacement by a Fox-Whitaker coalition which
accepted full ministerial responsibility for native affairs, than
for the passage of three measures: the Suppression of Rebellion
Act, the New Zealand Settlements Act and the New Zealand
Loan Act. The first suspended habeas corpus and authorised
the trial and punishment of persons suspected of rebellion by
summary court-martial proceedings without appeal to the
Supreme Court. The second authorised the Governor-in-Council
to proclaim districts in which any considerable portion of
the native inhabitants had been engaged in rebellion and to
take whatever land was required for European settlement,
compensation being payable to natives guiltless of violence

75. Press, 21 May 1863, p.2a-b. Gore Browne to McLean,
1 July 1863, McLean MSS., P.159, No.120, for
Gore Browne's approval of Weld's letter.

76. Rutherford, pp.482-4. Note also Gore Browne to Weld,
7 February 1864, Gore Browne MSS., 2/3, No.35 for the
ex-Governor's own defence of actions over the Waitara
purchase.
provided they delivered up their arms on demand. The third authorised the Government to borrow three million pounds for expenditure on the suppression of the rebellion, the settlement scheme and other public purposes. 77

Delayed by family illness Weld arrived in Auckland in time only to record his approval of the Loan Act, but his probable standpoint on the major resolutions which had already passed the House can be discerned from his speech at a public meeting in Canterbury in August. Faced with an imperial fait accompli, Weld was prepared to give in gracefully on the issue of ministerial responsibility for native affairs, though he envisaged some difficulty arising from the Home Government's retention of 'large powers of interference' through the discretionary powers reserved to the Governor. Confiscation he approved in principle as 'the only means of shewing the natives that there is something to be lost by turbulence'. But Weld's sanction was qualified, and his European-oriented bias obvious. He still failed to appreciate that the Maoris would never prize their land for its monetary worth alone.

I say that sufficient reserves for the natives must be made - reserves that, should they settle down into a peaceful and industrious people, will in themselves become worth more by the contiguity of British settlers' lands than all the waste lands are now worth. I say too that care must be taken that we do not punish the weak instead of the strong. I say that care must be taken not to involve the innocent with the guilty. I say that the first charges on the land must be for the establishment of sufficient bodies of settlers, and for their protection, to keep the peace; and then for the payment of all expenses arising out of the war; and that the residue be employed in educating politically

77. Rutherford, p.496.
and socially and in promoting the welfare of the natives themselves ... I have known the natives for years, and I have their interests at heart. I have never stooped to the morbid philanthropy that reserves all its pity for the wrongs of colored races and gives none to the injuries suffered by my own countrymen; but as in the moment of the natives' power I have endeavoured to protect the just interests of my own countrymen, so in the moment of our power will I steadily uphold the just rights and interests of the natives. 78

The Suppression of Rebellion Act Weld abhorred. Almost immediately on assuming office in 1864 he was to move its repeal. 79

The repressive legislation of 1863 was seriously to affect future race relations in the colony. Yet to Weld, the most important resolution passed was one dealing essentially with an affair of the past. For Weld had attended the Assembly with one fixed objective in mind: to secure from the House an unequivocal reassertion of the position it had taken in 1860, that the Maori wars had begun not because of a petty dispute over land but in reaction to an intolerable challenge to the Queen's sovereignty. By implication the House would be reaffirming its support for Gore Browne's stand on the Waitara dispute.

With the House in committee Weld moved:

1. That this House, having supported the measures taken by His Excellency the late Governor of New Zealand to suppress the armed interference of William King at Waitara, because, as set forth in its resolution of the 16th August, 1860, in the opinion of the House such measures were 'indispensable for the due maintenance of Her Majesty's authority,' considers that the renewed and definite recognition of his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, in his despatch of the 25th August, 1863, 'of the justice of exerting military force

---

78. _LT_, 12 August 1863, p.4d-f.
79. _PD_, 1864-6, p.46.
against William King and his allies, has happily rendered it unnecessary for this House to controvert or supplement statements made by His Excellency Sir George Grey in his despatches on the Waitara question.

2. That, in the opinion of this House, the good faith of the Crown and the interests of both races of Her Majesty's subjects in this Colony demand that the Chief Teira and his people should be protected from possibly aggression; and that, in justice to him, and in compliance with the request contained in his petition to this House, the investigation into the title to the Waitara Block promised by Governor Gore Browne and by Governor George Grey should be completed at the earliest practicable period. 80

These resolutions were passed without a dissentient vote and forwarded to the Governor. Such unanimity was astounding — and even Weld was taken aback. At the very least he had anticipated from ministers a defence of Grey's despatches. Their silence Weld believed now committed them to accept the view of the House as their own; hence if Grey — as he undoubtedly would — challenged those resolutions, then the ministry would be obliged to uphold the House's stand. 81

Weld felt he had achieved his end: in fact all that he had attained was a first round victory, and a dubious one at that. For the unanimity of the House and the lack of discussion was less an indication of support than a sign that the very last thing which most members wanted at that late stage in the session was to risk opening an interminable debate on the Waitara. Absence from the House or acquiescence in Weld's fairly innocuous resolutions was simply the policy of least resistance.

80. PD, 1861-3, p.925; Press, 19 December 1863, p.2b-c.
81. Weld to ? C.F Elliot, 26 February 1864, Weld Papers, II, No.11.
Grey reacted swiftly. He requested from the House specific illustration of statements in his despatches which members wished to controvert, and the reasons for their so doing. 22 Clearly anxious to forestall debate, Fox moved a select committee to consider the matter; Weld promptly countered with a direct reply to the Governor; then all discussion was halted as Fox upbraided Weld, arguing that the latter had agreed to support the first course proposed and had given no indication of having changed his mind. 83 In fact Weld had originally intended to move for a committee by ballot. A change in the standing orders precluded this and Weld had agreed, but with considerable reluctance, to accept Fox's select committee, for he correctly anticipated that it would be composed of a majority opposed to pursuing the matter. During his discussion with Fox, Weld declared he wished he had time to write a reply and move it. Fox suggested Weld do just that; Weld observed that there was no time. But as the previous debate continued to occupy the House longer than expected, Weld did find time to write a reply, notice of which he handed to Gillies on the ministerial bench. This notice Fox, sitting next to Gillies, apparently did not see. 84

In the altercation which followed Weld's amendment to Fox's motion, Weld felt Fox was putting him in a false position. It seems clear that Fox was merely making the most of his understanding that Weld had decided against moving a reply. Above all Fox wanted to shelve the issue of the Governor's despatches with as little discussion as possible and in this

82. PD, 1861-3, p.972, Message No.7.
83. ibid., pp.981-5.
84. Weld to Elliott, 26 February 1864.
aim had the overwhelming support of the House. Far better to leave the Waitara controversy 'to be remitted to the decision of the future historian of New Zealand'.

It would be both tedious and unnecessary to discuss in detail the steps by which the matter was eventually resolved. Briefly, backroom negotiation between Gillies, Whitaker and Weld effected a compromise whereby Fox withdrew his motion, Weld his reply, and Gillies moved a resolution 'framed to let down Sir G. Grey rather more easily'. Grey, however, again pressed for specific illustration of the controversial passages, at the same time requesting ministers to lay before the House a further despatch which he had written to Newcastle in his defence. Acting on an understanding that this despatch would simply be laid upon the table and an adjournment moved without debate, and satisfied that he had attained his original objective, Weld left Auckland shortly before the session ended. But in his absence debate did ensue and Weld was roundly criticised both for precipitating an unseemly dispute with the Governor and for departing before that dispute was finally resolved. As Fox expressed it, Weld's presence in the House and his absence from it 'were equally to be regretted'.

Yet what had begun as an unpopular endeavour to defend Gore Browne's honour against false imputation succeeded in

85. PD, 1861-3, p.985, (Fitzherbert).
86. Weld to Elliott, 26 February 1864; PD, 1861-3, pp.999-1001.
87. ibid., p.1008, Message No.15; pp.1009-1010.
88. Weld to Elliott, 26 February 1864.
89. PD, 1861-3, p.1022.
one sense beyond Weld's expectations. For Grey overplayed his hand. The debate in which the absent Weld was strongly censured ended with Stafford exposing an inconsistency in Grey's remarks on Wiremu Kingi's occupation of the Waitara.

For this eventual outcome Weld could claim no credit. And while his persistence in moving the original resolutions in face of the obvious irritation of the House showed a degree of courage and tenacity, it also revealed an even greater amount of political ineptitude. As later events would demonstrate, political considerations were of no consequence to Weld when a personal principle was at stake. More astute politicians would at least be ready to compromise according to the temper of the House.

Just as Weld's first experience of office had been followed by a period of disillusionment and uncertainty, so the years 1861–4 represent another unsettled phase in his career due this time more to political than personal disquiet. It was not that Weld wished to withdraw completely from the political scene. That his sense of duty would never have allowed. But in 1861 he was filled with an uncomfortable degree of foreboding, unable to convince himself that Grey and his ministerial advisers would succeed where Gore Browne and the Stafford cabinet had failed. By 1864, with the racial conflict still unresolved, Weld was deeply disturbed. He saw little chance of responsible government working satisfactorily with Grey in command and a Fox-Whitaker coalition to advise him. New Zealand politics, Weld declared, still smarting from his encounter with Fox, 'are rather too dirty a

90. ibid., p.1028.
game to be pleasant & consequently ... I am not anxious to be prominent in them. 91

Weld was also perturbed by the hardening attitude of the Home authorities and of London press commentators. He objected to the way in which responsibility for native affairs had been thrust upon the colony and, loyal Englishman to the core, was increasingly upset by allegations that an unnecessary war was being fought against the Maoris at British tax-payers' expense simply for the benefit of avaricious colonists grasping for Maori land. In Weld's philosophy the war had begun and was continuing for one reason alone: once and for all, the sovereignty of Her Majesty was to be firmly and unmistakably established. It is in this context of disillusionment and concern that Weld's third and final tenure of ministerial office in New Zealand must be viewed.

91. Weld to Elliott, 26 February 1864.
Mt Egmont (Taranaki) from one of the blockhouses to the right of Marsland Hill behind the town of N. Ply. /New Plymouth/ 1861

Copied from the original in possession of Mr & Mrs S. Scrope, Flaxbourne House, Great Ouseburn, York, England.
CHAPTER VIII

PREMIER: 1864-5

Relations between Grey and his ministerial advisers deteriorated rapidly during 1864 as their differences over confiscation and the direction of native policy proved irreconcilable. The Governor adamantly refused to sanction confiscation to the extent demanded by Fox and Whitaker; he correctly suspected them of being more concerned with financial gain than with using confiscation as a strictly limited punitive measure. Constitutionally the position was extremely difficult. Although native affairs were now a colonial responsibility, Grey was not inclined to act on the advice of ministers, and in this case his natural tendencies were given some semblance of legality by the discretionary authority vested in him so long as imperial troops remained in the colony. But the British Government had already proposed the solution to this administrative impasse. In accordance with an increasingly determined imperial policy of making self-governing colonies responsible for their internal defence, the colonial authorities were informed that the imperial regiments were to be withdrawn – unless the New Zealand Government wished to retain their services at a cost of £40 per man. Full responsibility for defence was the only means of obtaining complete control over the direction of native policy, but the Fox-Whitaker coalition was not prepared to pay this price. Thwarted over confiscation and facing financial collapse owing to the Home Government’s refusal to guarantee more than one million of the three million pound loan, the ministry resigned early in October, leaving Grey to sort out the chaos as best he could.  

1. Rutherford, pp.491-515.
Reports of this breakdown of the executive caused considerable consternation in the south, for though southern representatives professed little regret at the downfall of the Auckland-dominated ministry, they did manifest great concern for the colonists' reputation at Home. Both in the British press and parliament, complained David Monro, they were referred to as men without principle or humanity. To the Speaker it was some consolation to feel that those far-off critics betrayed 'a most deplorable ignorance' of the subjects on which they spoke and wrote, but Canterbury politicians in particular felt a need for strong action to disprove these allegations. Leading representatives were determined to send back all the troops and also to refuse the imperial guarantee of a one million pound loan on the grounds that the conditions attached by the British Government were incompatible with the colony's obligations to previous creditors.

At a public meeting in Christchurch on 21 October called to consider the venue for the next session of the General Assembly, Weld dominated proceedings. He moved the first resolution, noting the 'deepest anxiety' which the current political and financial condition of the colony was causing the people of Canterbury, and applauding Grey's decision to summon parliament without delay. Weld urged his audience to seize the opportunity which

2. Monro to Clifford, 11 November 1864, Clifford MSS.
And note Gore Browne to Weld, November 1864, Gore Browne MSS., GB 2/3, No.61: 'Certainly the guarantee for one million, of which more than half is to go to the Impl Govt is not worth accepting. Much better let your debt to the Crown stand over for the present & obtain what you want at the market price.'
the Home Government now proffered. For the first time in the history of New Zealand, he maintained, they were in a position of being able to obtain full control over the government of their own internal affairs. ⁴

This speech met with a good reaction in other centres. ⁵ Yet though there was some speculation of Weld as 'the coming man', ⁶ no one actually predicted that he would be premier. The Taranaki Herald had envisaged a possible combination of Pollen, Williamson and Graham; the Otago Daily Times plumped for Featherston; the Press favoured Sewell, Featherston, Fitzherbert or FitzGerald. ⁷ Monro, however, had heard that Weld was counted on — though he also suspected that Stafford was 'open for office'. It was going to be a stormy session, the Speaker forecast gloomily; he would have a difficult time trying to keep the House in order. ⁸

Weld too was aware of rumours that he might be offered the premiership. But he thought it unlikely. His policy would be too bold for the House, he declared in a letter to his brother, written while en route to Auckland.


5. e.g., *HBP*, 29 October 1864, p.6a; *WI*, 1 November 1864, p.2f, p.3a-b; *NE*, 3 November 1864, p.3d-f; *TH*, 12 November 1864, p.2f.

6. *ODT*, 29 October 1864, p.4d-e; *LT*, 27 October 1864, p.4c-d; 12 November 1864, p.4d-e; *WI*, 26 November 1864, p.2e.

7. *TH*, 3 October 1864, p.1b-c; *ODT*, 28 November 1864, p.4g; *Press*, 31 October 1864, p.2b-c.

8. Monro to Clifford, 11 November 1864.
I should propose to ask the Home Government to take away all the soldiers, and reduce our own forces to about 2000 men, whom I should arm with the best rifles procurable; these I would have trained to bush work and employ a part of them on the roads when not required to fight. With regard to the natives, I should not disarm them — it would be equivalent to a war of extermination to insist upon doing so. Their pride would be hurt as well as their fears roused, and we should only succeed with the loyal tribes, who would thus be at the mercy of their enemies.

He should pardon all offenders except those convicted of murder, Weld continued, and confiscate only enough land to show the Maoris that they lost by going to war. In order to secure the peace of the country, armed settlements would be set up where required.

But I should leave even the most turbulent tribes more land than they could ever require, which would then be of treble its present value. I should offer every inducement to the defeated tribes to settle down quietly, and enforce their submission by making roads through the most disturbed parts of the country — by force if necessary. At the same time I should stop the lavish expenditure in presents and bribing the natives to keep quiet. By the policy I have sketched out I believe the expenses of the colony might be reduced by one-half. 9

To his wife Weld admitted he now thought it possible that he might be asked to form a ministry, but he did not anticipate actually doing so.

I do not think that the house will go quite as far as I do about the troops, nor will Grey consent to my stipulations nor am I sure about being able to form a strong ministry especially as regards an attorney-general. So if you hear that I am 'sent for' you must not suppose that it is all over, & that we shall have

---

to leave Brackenfield for Wellington. One thing you may be sure of that the only thing that could induce me to give up my private wishes & form a ministry or join one would be seeing my way clearly to carrying out my views for the good of the country (with a strong majority & with the assent of Sir G Grey to all my stipulations in writing).  

Yet shortly after his arrival in Auckland, Weld was asked by Grey to take office. His assent was conditional upon Grey's acceptance of his proposed policy, the principal points of which were the withdrawal of the imperial troops, the maintenance of a small standing colonial defence force, the pacification of the Ngatiruanui country, and the confiscation of sufficient rebel land to meet the colonial government's guarantee to immigrants arriving under schemes inaugurated with the New Zealand Settlements Act. A Weld ministry would also remove the seat of government to Wellington, and undertake a 'reasonable commitment' for the services of imperial troops in action pending their withdrawal, providing those troops were employed as ministers directed. Finally, ministers would resign immediately in the event of any material point of difference with the Governor.

Grey's approach to Weld and his acceptance of the latter's proposals were no doubt due to a mixture of motives. Apparently he respected Weld's integrity while believing that he would prove far more accommodating than Whitaker over the vexed questions.

10. Weld to Mena Weld, 15 November 1864, Weld MSS., D16/C60, DRO.

of confiscation and the surrender of arms, but probably Grey also envisaged being able to influence if not dominate his erstwhile admirer. For whereas Weld hoped Grey's sanction of his proposals was an assurance of gubernatorial support, to Grey it was merely a means of securing a new ministry, hopefully a pliant one at that. Indeed Grey could hardly be expected to support a policy the very object of which was to deprive him of his remaining discretionary authority. Nor did he believe self-reliance to be a viable proposition. His was the acquiescence of an opportunist, nothing more.

Weld's motives were straightforward. Politically he felt it intolerable that the full working of responsible government should be retarded by imperial interference, direct or indirect, in native matters; militarily he still believed, as he had done since 1845, that locally trained colonists would be a far more effective fighting force than imperial troops; personally he felt it his bounden duty to uphold the colony's honour in its time of need. No doubt Weld was flattered by Grey's approach and proud of his new position, but in 1864 there was nothing like the sense of elation of a decade before. This time Weld viewed his prospects with a grim determination, resolved above all to bring an end to the Maori wars by the application of that firmness and justice which he believed had so long been lacking in official native policy. The sense of duty then was paramount, no personal gain was anticipated.

Weld formed an able ministry. Sewell joined him as Attorney-General, not willingly, he insisted, 'but because without me it is impossible to form a Government'. Others thought

themselves dispensable. Stafford, Crosbie Ward and FitzGerald were all approached. Stafford refused since he would not support the immediate removal of the seat of government; Ward declined, accepted, "but after some vacillation "thought it was no time for second rate politicians (i.e. Weld & all of them) to meddle with affairs" & so he declined"; while FitzGerald, strongly tempted, finally decided that he could do more to advance the native cause from without rather than within the ministry. Financial difficulties and an abiding dislike and distrust of Grey were also powerful considerations. The cabinet eventually comprised Weld as Colonial Secretary and Minister for Native Affairs; Sewell; and William Fitzherbert as Treasurer; together with Taranaki's Harry Atkinson holding the portfolio of defence and the ex-Superintendent of Otago, J.L.C. Richardson, that of Postmaster-General. All were activated by feelings of duty - so Sewell maintained. Certainly they faced formidable problems, the full extent of which was soon to be revealed.

Throughout the colony as in the House, the announcement of the new ministry aroused a mixed reception. While opinions

14. NE, 1 December 1864, Supplement, p.1a-d.
16. FitzGerald to Selfe, 13 February 1865, Selfe MSS., II, No.139; 15 May 1865, ibid., No.140.
18. NZS, 30 November 1864, p.2d-e; NE, 1 December 1864, Supplement, p.1a-d; Press, 1 December 1864, p.2b; TH, 3 December 1864, p.2d-e; WJ, 3 December 1864, p.2e-f; 6 December 1864, p.2f, p.3a quoting the New Zealander; LT, 3 December 1864, p.4c; ODT, 3 December 1864, p.4c-d; HBH, 10 December 1864, p.3a.
were divided as to the competence of his colleagues, Weld as premier was a popular choice, and Bowen probably spoke for most of his contemporaries when he stated: 'New Zealand affairs are in a sad mess. It is really plucky of Weld to tackle them now .... he is so plucky & straightforward that if anyone pulls through with Sir G Grey, he is the man to do it. He dreads & mistrusts the Governor as every one else does, but he will deal with him like a gentleman, & not disgrace the Colony by such Billingsgate as Fox & Whitaker indulged in.'

That at least was the opinion prevailing in the south. Aucklanders on the other hand viewed the accession of this southern ministry with undisguised hostility since, to many northerners, removal of the seat of government and withdrawal of the imperial troops together presaged financial ruin for themselves and for their province. Yet these colonists were not alone in their concern; though the personnel of the Weld ministry met with general approval elsewhere, its policy did not.

On 30 November came the resolutions basic to the 'self-reliant' policy. Declaring that the joint responsibility of Governor and ministers for the management of native affairs had resulted in divided counsels, a vacillating policy, and heavy and unnecessary expenditure; and recognising the right of the imperial authorities to insist upon the maintenance of this system of double government as long as the colony was receiving the aid of British troops for the suppression of internal disturbances, Weld moved that the Home Government be requested to withdraw its forces and to instruct the Governor to be

---
'guided entirely by the recommendations of his constitutional Advisers in Native as well as in ordinary affairs.'

Weld urged the House to give ministers wholehearted support on this issue. He believed that his resolutions reflected the views of two-thirds of the country, but if the House thought otherwise the ministry was not prepared to hold its position on sufferance. 'Therefore let it be understood that we can accept no amendments that may force us to abandon principles.' For Weld constitutional considerations were paramount and he based his speech almost exclusively upon them. But the withdrawal of the troops had also to be seen from another angle: the colony could not afford to keep them. 'This may be lower ground to take than our desire for the complete management of our internal affairs, which we cannot obtain so long as we ask Imperial assistance; but it is a practical ground - it is an argument which is absolutely conclusive: we have not got the money, nor can we get the money, to meet the demands which the Imperial Government has informed us it will make should the troops remain in this colony .... Policy, after all, mainly rests on questions of finance.'

Despite Weld's plea for unanimity, opposition came from two quarters. One he undoubtedly anticipated. Aucklanders were totally opposed to the withdrawal of the troops. Constitutional niceties mattered little when that province's safety and prosperity were at stake. But Superintendent Robert Graham's amendment advocating temporary separation of the colony and the

20. PD, 1864-6, p.47.
continuance of British aid and control in the north until peace was secured was eventually defeated, 35:18. 22

Far more disconcerting, however, was the attitude of Weld's southern supporters. Stafford, FitzGerald, Featherston and Francis Jollie (member for Timaru) together persuaded Weld to alter his resolution to read that the colony would make every effort to place itself in a position of self-defence against internal aggression with a view to accepting the withdrawal of the imperial troops 'at the earliest possible period consistent with the maintenance of imperial interests and the safety of the colony'. The amended resolutions, moved by Atkinson, were subsequently passed without a division. 23

Weld in fact genuinely believed that he had changed merely the wording, not the intent of his declaration. He still sought the removal of the troops as soon as possible; he failed to see the opportunity for delaying tactics which the amendment provided. Sewell on the other hand recognised all too clearly that the second version was 'greatly inferior' to the first and had little

22. ibid., pp.98,105-7; Sewell Journal, II, entry beginning 4 December 1864, p.280; entry beginning 11 December 1864, pp.282-3.

23. PD, 1864-6, pp.92-100, 113-42; Weld memorandum, 30 December 1864, AJHR, 1865, AI, No.2, pp.1-3. J.C. Richmond to C.W. Richmond, 22 December 1864, R-A Papers, II,134: 'Weld was not prepared with the needful statements and held his position only through the personal confidence felt in him and the determination of the majority of the Assembly not to peril our last chance of escape by dissension.' For Colonial Office reaction see, for example, Fortescue minute, 16 March 1865, on Weld memorandum, 30 December 1864, enclosure in Grey to Cardwell, 7 January 1865, No.10, CO 209/188, NA: 'An excellent state paper wh. does great credit to the Weld Ministry.'
patience with their less resolute supporters who, lacking the courage to tell the Home Government boldly to take away the troops, instead 'shilly shally and potter with the question'.

The ministry's determination still to press for the earliest possible removal of the troops was undoubtedly reinforced by revelations of the colony's financial state. Fitzherbert presented an 'alarming view' to his colleagues. Current revenue would only cover normal civil expenses, and from their predecessors, whose financial calculations had been completely undermined owing to the impasse over confiscation and the failure of the three million pound loan, the new ministers had inherited a colonial debt of some £1,400,000 together with the problem of financing current military expenditure. Since it was political suicide to suggest securing more revenue from the provinces by upsetting the 1856 Compact, increased taxation and further loans were the only alternative means of raising capital. The House proved cooperative and sanctioned additional customs duties. It also agreed to proposals for issuing £1,000,000 of three-year debentures at 8% and for raising the interest rate on the balance of the three million pound loan from 5% to 6% in the hope of making it more attractive to London investors.

24. Sewell Journal, II, 4 December 1864, p.278. However, Weld did recognise that differences over these resolutions would affect the future prospects of his ministry. See Weld to Mena Weld, 3 December 1864, Weld Papers, II, No.12. Also, Bowen to Selfe, 15 December 1864: 'I heard from him [Weld] by this mail. He has got a majority by conceding a little on the question of sending home the troops, but is a little down-hearted at the prospect before him.'


26. Sewell memorandum, 7 January 1865, AJHR 1865, AI, No.3, pp.3-4. Note also Sewell memorandum, 3 January 1865, enclosure in Grey to Cardwell, 6 January 1865, No.7, CO 209/188.
With members dispersing after a session lasting less than three weeks, Weld and his colleagues were free to concentrate on the several major issues confronting them. Most urgent was clearly the financial problem: without accommodation from its bankers, the Government would be quite unable to meet its immediate cash commitments, a significant portion of which were payments to military settlers in the Waikato, enlisted under the 1863 scheme but still not located on their lands. The situation would deteriorate within weeks when some 3000 civil immigrants were due to arrive in the colony and would be entitled to government assistance until they were settled or employed. 27

Closely related was the question of confiscation. Grey's proclamation of 25 October offering a free pardon to all who swore allegiance and ceded such land as the Governor and General demanded had expired on 10 December without eliciting any response from the defeated Waikato tribes. Some decision therefore had to be made on the area to be confiscated, the very issue over which the previous ministry had come to grief. A third major problem was the continued rebellion in the Taranaki-Wanganui district. Peace would not be attained until the Ngatiruanui were suppressed.

Leaving Sewell and Fitzherbert to negotiate with a Bank of New Zealand directed by political opponents, Weld, accompanied by Cameron, departed for the Waikato on 15 December to fix sites for the proposed military settlements. He returned ten days later, apparently cheerful about the settlers' prospects. 28 As well he might. For the 1,200,000 acres confiscated by Grey on 17 December

28. Ibid., 25 December 1864, p.305.
included some of the best land in the Waikato, land of the comparatively peaceful Waikato and Ngatihaua tribes, while that of the far more turbulent Ngatimaniapoto remained relatively untouched.

Responsibility for this act, 'the worst injustice ever perpetrated by a New Zealand government', must rest squarely with Weld, yet it seems ironic that he of all men should have committed it. He after all had been preaching for years a policy of justice and firmness at all risks. Why then, at the height of his political career did he actually initiate, not simply condone, this particular injustice?

The explanation is two-fold and stems basically from the implicit contradiction in Weld's long-held philosophy of 'how to handle the natives' and from his essentially limited understanding of the Maori way of life. First with the Waitara, now with the Waikato, the incompatibility of 'true justice' with Maori interests when European interests were also at stake was unmistakably exposed, yet neither Weld nor any of his colleagues questioned the validity of that confiscation and certainly did not anticipate the criticism of later commentators. Weld's motives are perhaps best demonstrated in answer to a number of related questions. On what basis in fact were the boundaries delineated? Was he aware that the least hostile tribes would be the worst affected? And why did Grey assent to Weld's request for confiscation when he had refused those of Fox and Whitaker?

Military occupation determined the boundaries of confiscation in the Waikato, not government endeavour to secure good

land as opposed to rebel territory. The boundaries stated in the proclamation of 17 December corresponded exactly with the boundaries of land occupied by the imperial troops in the Waikato as depicted on a map compiled by Charles Heaphy, Government Surveyor, and confirmed as accurate by Cameron on 15 December. 30

Weld's decision to base the extent of confiscation on this military consideration must be seen in the context of attitudes expressed for well on twenty years. For underlying Weld's determination to end the irresponsible system of double government in New Zealand was the long-held conviction that the vacillation of official native policy had been the primary cause of war in the colony. In his opinion British authority had never been firmly and resolutely upheld. The Maoris in consequence had never really accepted it. 31 First FitzRoy and then Grey had been guilty in Weld's eyes of failing to teach the Maoris to respect British rule; Gore Browne alone had taken a firm stand but in Weld's view the benefits of that had been completely negatived by Grey's surrender of the Waitara. Now at last British supremacy had been asserted in the Waikato, and since the defeated tribes had refused to avail themselves of Grey's amnesty, it was the Government's duty to take decisive action. To have withdrawn from any part of the entire area currently held by the troops would be interpreted both by the Waikato Maoris and by tribes elsewhere

30. The map is enclosure No.1 in Grey to Cardwell, 14 December 1865, No.162, CO 209/192, NA. H.A. Atkinson to A.S. Atkinson, 18 December 1864, R-A Papers, II, 133: 'We have agreed with Grey upon a draft proclamation....The whole of Waikato is to be kept by us....Such land will be taken in Taranaki as the Govr. sees fit....We have not defined the lands at Taranaki until we have been over them with the troops'.

as a sign of weakness, not conciliation: of that Weld was convinced.

Having no detailed knowledge of tribal boundaries in the Waikato, Weld relied on the Heaphy classification, a haphazard assessment at best. Heaphy's original source of information is not clear, but a map attached to a memorandum of 17 November 1864 depicted 'districts which had supplied combatants on the rebel side to the war', 32 and the entire area affected by the 17 December proclamation fell into this general category. Detail of land ownership on the map of 15 December was limited to such labels as 'doubtful', 'land offered for sale', 'rebels'.

But though Weld can be criticised for what now seems his deplorable ignorance of tribal territory, however comprehensive his information, the boundaries of confiscation would still have been the same, based on military occupation. Only the extent and nature of the areas reserved for native purposes might have altered.

Once again Weld's attitude on this issue must be viewed in the light of opinions formulated over the previous twenty years. As with so many of his contemporaries, Weld never really understood the Maori attachment to communal land holding; he failed still to appreciate that this communal tenure had social implications far transcending the economic disadvantages which seemed so apparent to Europeans. Individualised titles were to Weld the key to Maori advancement, 33 for property ownership was regarded

---

32. C. Heaphy memorandum on the Native Land Question, AJHR, 1864, E9.

33. See, for instance, Weld’s comments on the new Native Lands Act. NZS, 18 February 1865, p.2e-f; HBH, 16 March 1865, p.1e-f.
as the first step towards political enfranchisement and since the defeat of the King movement would demonstrate the futility of setting up rival institutions, it was to the Maoris' advantage to begin treading that path. This was the philosophy underlying Weld's belief that any inadvertent confiscation of the land of friendly tribes would in fact work to their advantage since ample reserves would be returned to them with individual titles secured.

Weld's reasoning was clearly fallacious, based as it was on a limited European understanding of Maori attitudes and needs, but at least it had the merit of being disinterested. Unlike his predecessors in office, Weld never viewed confiscation as the means of paying the expenses of war. 34 Grey appreciated this fact. That is why he agreed to Weld's request for confiscation when he had refused those of the previous ministry, and although Fox maintained otherwise, 35 the two ministries differed markedly over the extent as well as the intent of confiscation. Weld's attitude was far more in keeping with Grey's original conception of confiscation as a strictly limited punitive measure and deterrent to future rebellion. If there was a financial consideration behind the Waikato confiscation, it was that of the Government's need to determine the actual land to be taken, surveyed, and then inhabited by the military settlers. Not until they were located on their fifty-acre lots, would the colonial government be relieved of the cost of the settlers' maintenance.

Sewell and Fitzherbert had so far been unable to resolve the ministry's financial difficulties. Near bankruptcy was

34. Weld memorandum, 20 March 1865, AJHR, 1865, AL, No.7, p.8; ibid., Weld memorandum, 2 September 1865, AL, No.40, pp.26-27.
imminent — and the Bank of New Zealand seemed loath to ease the situation. Ostensibly because New Zealand Government credit was so low after the failure of the three million loan on the London market, the Bank refused the ministry’s urgent request for a three-month advance of £300,000 to help meet its immediate cash commitments. But Sewell for one suspected political intrigue, and openly rued the day when the Government account had been transferred from the Union Bank of Australia to the institution founded by Thomas Russell. Only after protracted negotiations, during which there was a break with the BNZ and arrangements set under way to transfer the account back to the Union, was an agreement eventually reached that enabled the Government to borrow £120,000 at 7% on the security of debentures to be sold on the Australian market. 36

On 31 December Weld, Fitzherbert and Richardson sailed south leaving Sewell, Atkinson and W.B.D. Mantell, appointed Native Minister 17 December, to finalise any last minute arrangements for transferring the seat of government to Wellington. They were also responsible for ministerial policy, 37 but since the main outlines had been settled before Weld’s departure, no major difficulties were expected. They arose nevertheless.

Of most concern was the growing controversy over the Taranaki-Wanganui campaign. Weld maintained that the pacification of the Ngatiruanui, a fundamental tenet of his policy,


37. Weld to Mantell, 29-30 December 1864, Mantell MSS.
could be achieved by a swift campaign of military occupation and such limited confiscation as would chastise the rebels and enable a 'traversable military road' to be built between Wanganui and New Plymouth, with military settlements and one or two strong military posts to defend it. In this opinion he was supported by Atkinson, familiar with the terrain of his adopted province, and also by Colonel H.J. Warre, senior officer in charge of the Taranaki district. But given the limited strength of colonial defence forces at that time, the assistance of imperial troops was essential if this campaign was to be the quick decisive victory Weld envisaged. And indeed, the whole future of Weld's self-reliant policy depended on that campaign being a speedy success.

Weld felt that the deployment of imperial troops in this way did not contradict either the spirit or the letter of the self-reliant resolutions. In his original policy statement, he had declared the Government's willingness to undertake a reasonable liability for the cost of troops employed in the field at ministerial

39. Sewell Journal, II, 31 December 1864, p. 322; 6 January 1865, p. 325; Rutherford, p. 522, footnote 26. For evidence of the ministry's regard for Warre, see C. Brown to H.A. Atkinson, 10 January 1865, R-A Papers, II, 145: 'Fitzherbert gave me what was evidently meant as a lecture to behave myself properly to Col. Warre, and even Weld told me "he was a bold dashing officer, who if left /sic/ go by the Genl would do more than ever the Genl. would do, if down here himself"!'
direction. Thus the use of imperial forces in a Taranaki-Wanganui campaign under the instructions of Grey as Commander-in-Chief acting on the advice of his responsible ministers was seen as completely consistent with the ministry's stated policy. Now that the Waikato was quiescent and plans under way for the location of military settlers on their land at Cambridge, Kihikihi, Hamilton and Pirongia, two regiments could well be called in to assist in this last-ditch campaign pending instructions from Home for the troops' recall.

But Weld had reckoned without General Cameron's opposition. For Cameron like Grey had a vested interest in thwarting ministerial intentions; whereas Grey opposed the withdrawal of the troops for reasons of personal authority, however, Cameron opposed Grey's instructions that he should proceed to Wanganui and give effect to government policy for fear that this would prolong the regiments' — and consequently his — presence in the colony. Instructions simply to suppress the Ngatiruanui in Taranaki might have met with Cameron's cooperation; orders to extend military activities into the Wanganui district Cameron viewed with undisguised suspicion and increasing distaste. He was far less sanguine than ministers as to the speed with which the occupation could be effected and a road constructed. Undoubtedly he exaggerated the difficulties. No doubt, too, he was growing reluctant to undertake further campaigns against a native race for whose military skill the British soldiers had gained considerable respect. Yet perhaps Cameron was suspicious not


merely of government intentions but of Grey's motives as well, for even if London authorities agreed to withdraw the troops as ministers had requested, the final decision on their departure date would still be Grey's. The involvement of those forces in a prolonged west coast campaign would enable the Governor to retain the discretionary authority which he would never relinquish readily.

In the few weeks since the Weld ministry had taken office, one fact had become patently obvious: for all its show of independence, the Government was still heavily dependent on imperial aid, and such was the financial and military position inherited by Weld and his colleagues, it would be months before self-reliance was anything but an ideal. Still determined to realise that aim, ministers recognised that in the interim they needed full cooperation from imperial officials in the colony and temporary financial accommodation from the home authorities. Neither was forthcoming.

Although Weld knew of Cameron's objections to his west coast scheme before leaving for Wellington via Taranaki, the premier was powerless to prevent Cameron from ordering 'the whole apparatus of a campaign'. 42 Grey alone could intervene to limit the scale of preparations, but he preferred his island retreat of Kawau to the contentious atmosphere of Auckland. 43 Returning only when exasperated ministers despatched a steamer to fetch him, 44 the Governor deliberately delayed discussion on the issue.

42. Sewell Journal, II, entry beginning 31 December 1864, p.320 which alludes to Weld's last interview with Cameron and Grey; 6 January 1865, p.324.

43. ibid., 29 December 1864, p.316 refers to Grey stocking his new possession with birds and beasts; 'amusing himself as a gentleman of private means has a perfect right to do, but not as the Governor of a Colony, at such a crisis as this should do'.

until after Weld's departure, and then put Sewell, Atkinson and Mantell in the difficult position of upholding their west coast plans in face of very strong pressure. As they informed Weld somewhat ruefully, they had 'a great trouble' over the Taranaki expedition. 

After your general memorandum had gone in he said to Atkinson - There is a great inconsistency between your recommendation ... to withdraw the troops & your recommending operations at Taranaki. If you undertake the latter the effect will be to keep the troops here 2 years at least. Atkinson said we didn't mean to detain the troops we thought the work at Taranaki might be done before they left in ordinary circumstances but that on no account did we mean anything recommended by us to have the effect that he represented. He

45. Rutherford, p.523; Sewell Journal, II, 6 January 1865, p.325. Grey to Cameron, 26 December 1864, AJHR, 1865, A4, No.2, p.1 indicates that Cameron had expressed his doubts about the proposed campaign shortly after returning from the Waikato.


47. Sewell, Atkinson and Mantell to Weld, 7 January 1865, Weld Papers, II, No.13.

48. Weld memorandum, 19 February 1864, AJHR, 1865, A1, No.1, p.1 in which the objectives of the prompt and immediate action recommended at Taranaki and Wanganui were stated as: 'the military occupation of sufficient country to give possession of the Patea river from the sea to the bush, and of the country between that river and Wanganui, thereby enabling the Waitotara road to be carried on; such extension as may be found practicable of the area of operations from Tataraimaka southwards, so as to enable a block of land to be taken between Tataraimaka and the Stoney river - the ultimate object of Ministers being the construction of a thoroughfare between Taranaki and Wanganui, and the establishment of military settlements wherever necessary. It will also be the desire of Ministers, as soon as circumstances may permit, to occupy as a military settlement a block north of the mouth of the Waitara river, between the land of the friendly chief Nikorune and the river.'
begged us to put our views explicitly in writing - which Atkinson did 49 - the substance being that - if the intended operations were in the least calculated to prolong the play of the troops he did not mean to recommend them.

Atkinson’s memo was the subject of another interview with Grey during which the Governor 'begged' ministers to withdraw it 'because he said if we persisted in it, he should suspend all operations at Taranaki & Wanganui merely placing these settlements in a state of safety & abandoning all our plans'. And while ministers were trying to resolve this problem, they received from Grey a copy of Cameron's letter of 5 January 50 in which the General '(evidently very angry)' demanded to know 'whether he was to commence the plan of wide confiscation of land involving a detention of the troops'. Cameron also intimated that he was about to write to England for reinforcements. This caused Atkinson and Sewell, and Mantell eventually, to adhere substantially to the ministerial memo of 5 January refusing to recommend any campaign which would impede the withdrawal of the troops. Then followed another long interview with the Governor;

Grey urging us in the strongest possible manner to persist - saying we were mad if we didn't That the Home Govt wouldn't make us pay That we stood committed by our former minute that there would be no peace to the Glory till the Taranaki question was settled etc etc etc I said that if it was meant to keep the troops 2 or 3 years longer - with possible reinforcements - & to charge the colony 40£ per man - that was simply ruin to the colony & I would be no party to operations involving these results. Atkinson I think agreed with me in


50. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 5 January 1865, A4, No.4, p.2.
the main—Mantell was disposed to be politic & not to lose the main chance of getting the Taranaki question settled now whilst the troops were here. It ended in our agreeing to withdraw the minute 51 & writing to him to ask him to get from the Home Government permission to enlist men—(say 1500) from the Regiments here to form a Colonial Defence force. 52 When the answer is received then we will recommend him to withdraw troops—I am not quite satisfied with what we did, but it was a compromise perhaps the best that could be made. Both the General & the Governor pushed us into this dilemma—that if we didn't take their plans—with the possible consequences—they would do nothing at Taranaki. It appeared to us that the alteration was too serious for us to sanction so we succumbed. I hope you will not quarrel with us—Your absence placed us in great difficulties. He threw that in our teeth.

Grey certainly exploited the divided cabinet to full advantage, as Atkinson's postscript to this letter reveals.

'H E told me point blank that in his view he was acting unconstitutionally in listening to any modification of the Premier's views on the recommendatn of his colleagues in his absence—I suggested that we shd be really grateful if His Excellency would by a brief minute enlighten us on this point of constitutional practice. I hope you agree with him.' 53

Weld sympathised with his colleagues' dilemma, all the more so since he himself was now thoroughly distrustful of Grey's

51. See ibid., Grey to Cameron, 7 January 1865, A4, No.8, p.3.
52. ibid., Mantell to Grey, 7 January 1865, enclosure in Grey to Cardwell, 7 January 1865, A5, No.10, p.3.
intentions. 'On the whole he looks like selling us if he can', Weld confided to his wife; 'my absence from him has I fear been very unfortunate but it can't be helped.' Already Weld was feeling the pressures of office and the strain of trying to anticipate Grey's next move. Concerned to see his friend looking so 'worn and anxious', Bowen reiterated his admiration of Weld's courage. 'It is really plucky of him to take affairs in hand just now, as his private affairs makes it most inconvenient, & the position of the Executive is so ill-defined. He distrusts Sir G Grey as much as everyone else does. But it was necessary that men should take office who knew how gentlemen should deal with a Governor like Sir George.'

Yet even the gentlemanly approach was proving ineffective. Grey was not content with thwarting ministerial military objectives; he was also refusing to honour his agreement to go south to open the Otago Exhibition. Pleading the unsettled state of native affairs, and with his personal inclination reinforced by military advice, Grey virtually blackmailed the remaining ministers into sanctioning his decision to stay in the north.

This apparently minor matter had major consequences. His unpopularity notwithstanding, the people of Otago had spent 'a

56. Cameron to Grey, 6 January 1865, AJHR, 1865, A4, No.7, p.3.
57. Grey to ministers, 7 January 1865, No.3; ministers to Grey, 7 January 1865, No.4; Grey to ministers, 7 January 1865, No.5, PM1/4, NA. Also H.A. Atkinson to A.S. Atkinson, 3 January, 7 January 1865. Sewell Journal, II, 7 January 1865, pp.332-3; III, 8 January 1865, pp.2-4; 9 January 1865, p.5.
lot of money' preparing to give the Governor a good reception. It was years since he had ventured south and clearly it would have enhanced the ministry's prestige to have persuaded Grey to visit his southern domains. His refusal to do so was to exacerbate Otago irritation with the dominance of Auckland in colonial affairs, encourage extremist separatist agitation, and cause a backlash against a ministry patently unable to outmanoeuvre Grey. Of more immediate importance, however, was the effect of the Governor's immobility on the Wanganui campaign. Weld had anticipated having him in the south soon after Cameron commenced operations, since only through Grey could the colonial government hope to exercise any significant control over the direction of military affairs. Instead the swift decisive action which ministers had recommended turned into a full-scale display of imperial obstruction, the result of Grey's double-dealing with Government and General, and of Cameron's understandable reluctance to embark on any fresh campaign. One constitutional objective was indeed attained - but scarcely in the way Weld had envisaged. The old system of double government was indeed replaced - but by a triple division of authority made all the worse by the geographical separation of Grey in Auckland, Cameron in Wanganui and ministers in Wellington.

When agreeing to withdraw Atkinson's memo of 5 January

58. Bowen to Selfe, 15 January 1865; LT, 19 January 1865, p.3b. Richardson in Dunedin was suspicious that some political opponents were preparing to make the occasion of the Governor's reception 'a separation procession'. See Richardson to Weld, 10 January 1865, Weld Papers, II, No.14. ORP, 6 January 1865, p.4e-g for a brief history of the separation movement.
and to abide by Weld's recommendations of 15 December, Sewell, Mantell and Atkinson had understood that the forthcoming west coast campaign would still be conducted along the economical lines sketched out by Atkinson during their interview with Grey on 6 January. 59 Grey fostered this illusion: Cameron soon dispelled it. During discussions shortly before he departed for Wanganui, the General ridiculed the concept of a 1500-strong colonial defence force and warned that the Government's plan to confiscate a ten mile wide strip of coastal territory from Wanganui to the Waitara would cause a major conflict and necessitate imperial reinforcement. 60 Grey upheld Cameron's objections. Although he had previously sanctioned the draft proclamation, 61 the Governor now restricted the proposed confiscation to middle Taranaki, west of the Waitara–Waimate track. This suggested, erroneously, that the Government's primary objective was to secure the territory adjacent to the New Plymouth settlement.

As Rutherford has noted, 62 Grey's prevarication at this stage was most unfortunate. While ministers still adhered to their original objectives, Cameron arrived in Wanganui on 20 January to begin a campaign to which he was totally opposed and which, in view of the modified confiscation, now seemed totally unnecessary. 63

59. See above, footnote 53.
60. Sewell Journal, III, 14 January 1865, pp.8-10.
62. p.524.
63. Cameron to Grey, 21 January 1865, AJHR, 1865, A4, No.16, p.5.
Cameron made no secret of his attitude as he and his equipage moved up the coast at a painstakingly slow pace. He magnified a spirited attack by the Maoris at Nukumaru on 25 January into a major offensive, but refused to retaliate against the important Ngatiruanui stronghold of the Weraroa pa on the grounds of insufficient force. Nor would he countenance Warre's proposal to move a flying column south from New Plymouth, the Taranaki commander's aim being to link up with his General at the Patea river: 'Colonel Warre talks (how easy it is to talk) ....' On 30 January Cameron formally recommended that Grey should apply for a reinforcement of 2000 men, more if further confiscation was planned. He arranged for imperial troops to be diverted to Wanganui from Taranaki and Wellington and underlined the responsibility of the colonial authorities to provide militia and volunteer replacements for local defence; 'if the Government are determined to continue the war they must expect to be called upon to bear part of the expense'.

These unnecessary demands for colonial and imperial reinforcements continued as Cameron advanced ponderously from Nukumaru to the Waitotara, thence to Patea on 16 February.

64. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 28 January 1865, A4, No.19, p.6.
65. loc.cit.; Weld to H.A.Atkinson, 4 February 1865,(Private), H.A.Atkinson MSS.: 'It is evident that Cameron wont give Warre a chance ....'
66. Cameron to Grey, 30 January 1865, AJHR, 1865, A4, No.21, p.7.
67. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 31 January 1865, A4, No.22, p.8.
68. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 1 February 1865, A4, No.23, p.8.
69. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 8 February 1865, A4, No.26, p.9; 11 February 1865, A4, No.27, pp.9-10.
Repeatedly, Cameron voiced doubts as to the validity of his proceedings, not reassured in the slightest by Grey's insistence that the expedition was 'essentially necessary'. The General also complained, with justification, about the inconvenient lack of constant communication with Auckland and Wellington, and he strongly urged both Governor and ministers to come to Patea themselves with a view to revising instructions formulated in Auckland without due regard for local conditions.

Although ministers in Wellington were infuriated beyond measure by Cameron's dilatory conduct, evidence of which was being received from government agents on the front, Weld steadfastly refused to interfere between Governor and General. Even when Cameron wrote directly, querying the proposed coastal operations and suggesting that the premier might himself come to the Waitotara if his presence in Wellington was not 'indispensably necessary', Weld declined to take any action without Grey's authority. As he pencilled years later on a draft of his reply:

70. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 21 January 1865, A4, No.16, p.5; 28 January 1865, A4, No.19, pp.6-7; 11 February 1865, A4, No.27, pp.9-10; 17 February 1865, A4, No.30, p.10.
71. ibid., Grey to Cameron, 26 January 1865, A4, No.18, p.6.
72. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 8 February 1865, A4, No.26, p.9.
73. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 11 February 1865, A4, No.27, pp.9-10; 23 February 1865, A4, No.33, p.11.
74. e.g., Sewell Journal, III, 20 February 1865, p.94.
75. e.g., W.Strickland to Weld, 28 January 1865, Weld Papers, III, No.2. See also Strickland to Weld, 26 March 1865, Weld MSS., No.12; ibid., 5 April 1865, No.14, for increasingly critical comment on Cameron's activities.
76. Cameron to Weld, 11 February 1865, Weld MSS., No.8.
'I wrote this fearing a trap. I could not direct the General or make him act my way nor would I be his scapegoat.' But news of Cameron's decision to march his forces north from Nukumaru and Waitotara without first attacking the Weraroa pa provoked ministers to a breach of military etiquette. To the Government it seemed that Cameron, 'having effectually upset the hive by his operations, and set the bees a stinging', was now moving on 'leaving them to molest without interruption' the whole of the Wanganui - Rangitikei country to the rear. Recognising that they could not intervene to direct their own colonial forces now under imperial command, ministers instead sent Mantell to Wanganui to secure assistance for friendly Maoris fighting rebel forces up the Wanganui river. 'There is no doubt that if we had no soldiers, these friendly natives with the aid of a small Colonial force properly handled would settle the question'; this was an exasperated Sewell's assessment of the situation, and it seemed all the more justified when news of the 'friendlies' success at Jerusalem on 24 February reached Wellington at the same time as Grey.

Cameron had, however, assisted the Government in one respect. A strong missive from Weld to Grey stressing that his presence in the capital was urgently required had elicited only an evasive response to the effect that he would come to Wellington

77. Weld to Cameron, 14 February 1865, (Draft), Weld Papers, II, No.19.
78. NZS, 15 March 1865, p.2d.
80. Weld to Mantell, 28 February 1865, Mantell MSS.; Sewell Journal, III, 2 March 1865, pp.99-100; Rutherford, p.527.
'in a few days', native affairs permitting. Cameron's complaints were far more effective in spurring Grey to leave Auckland. The Governor sailed in the third week of February, called in briefly at Patea for consultations with the General, and then came on to Wellington on 2 March. He met with a cool reception. After four months in office, Weld and his colleagues had lost whatever initial hope they may have had of Grey's ability or willingness to work honestly with them. Yet within days Grey had broken through the barriers of hostility and distrust and virtually convinced ministers that they had his full cooperation in their conflict with Cameron. Even Sewell was prepared to give Grey the benefit of the doubt. That in itself was no small achievement.

The Governor won his ministers' confidence by betraying that of his General. First he intimated that he had remained in Auckland out of deference to Cameron's wishes (an excuse valid for January only). Next he outlined for approval the plan of operations which he and Cameron had sketched out at Patea. Ministers were prepared to accept the explanation, but refused

---

81. Weld to Grey, 24 January 1865, Weld MSS., No.7; Grey to Weld, 8 February 1865, Weld Papers, II, No.17. Note also Weld to H.A.Atkinson, 31 January 1865, H.A. Atkinson MSS.; Weld to H.A.Atkinson, 4 February 1865, (Private); Weld to Grey, 14 February 1865, Grey MSS., W.26, No.1, AP.

82. Though if Sewell's comments are at all indicative of cabinet feeling, these hopes were few enough from the beginning. See, for instance, Sewell Journal, II, 23 November 1864, p.275; entry beginning 4 December 1864, p.281; 14 December 1864, p.291; 16 December 1864, p.294.

83. ibid., III, 2 March 1865, p.104.
to be trapped into sanctioning and therefore assuming the responsibility for and cost of the military scheme. 'We avoided giving any opinion', Sewell noted, 'told him we were generally uninformed as to what was being, or intended to be done – and pointed out the unreasonableness of our being called on to furnish Colonial forces, at Colonial cost for operations over which we had no control.'

At this point Grey, indirectly but unmistakably, revealed the gist of a letter of 28 January in which Cameron had given full vent to his suspicion of ministerial motives for the west coast campaign. Coinciding as it did with a further request for troops and military settlers, and coming at a time of extreme financial difficulty, this revelation immediately secured the Governor's objective.

Grey's proceedings seem to have been carefully calculated for Cameron's procrastination and formal recommendation for large-scale reinforcement had placed him in a difficult position. If he were to retain any control in the colony Grey could not afford to be at odds with both Government and General. An alignment with Cameron was unlikely. The Imperial Government would not condone a Governor and General acting in direct opposition to the wishes of the colonial authorities, particularly on a matter where imperial expenditure was so vitally concerned, and Grey well knew that he would be unable to persuade ministers to ask for reinforcements, a request which would be refused in London anyway. Clearly his best policy was an alliance with ministers. But only by some extraordinary means could Grey have hoped to overcome the distrust which his own behaviour at Auckland had

84. ibid., pp.104-5. For details of the plans sketched out at Patea, see Cameron to Grey, 12 May 1865, AJHR, 1865, A4, No.98, pp.35-36.
85. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 28 January 1865, A4, No.19, pp.6-7.
86. ibid., Grey memorandum, 4 March 1865, A1, No.8, p.9.
reinforced. The disclosure of Cameron's charges proved to be effective shock tactics. Ministers were beguiled into believing that Grey had been driven in disgust to cooperate with them in their struggle against Cameron. Grey's subsequent actions reinforced this impression as he accompanied Weld to Wanganui to confer with the victorious 'friendlies' and stayed there for the rest of March, apparently at Weld's request, in order to keep open the lines of communication between colonial and imperial authorities.

If Weld and his associates appear to have been unduly gullible or too ready to work with the Governor, it should be remembered that their position was desperate. For weeks they had stood by helplessly in Wellington, unable to accomplish anything without the cooperation of either Cameron or Grey. Already the protracted campaign had completely upset Fitzherbert's financial calculations and therefore jeopardised the whole future of self-reliance. Harry Atkinson spoke for all his colleagues when he admitted: 'We must support Grey against the General or we shall be done.'

Grey's show of cooperation revitalised the ministry. The frustration and feeling of hopelessness which for weeks had pervaded government circles now gave way to a new sense of

89. ibid., H.A. Atkinson to A.S. Atkinson, 20 March 1865, 155. ibid., Weld to H.A. Atkinson, 29 March 1865, 157 for evidence of ministers' difficulties when trying to formulate a policy in Grey's absence.
90. e.g., Weld to H.A. Atkinson, 31 January 1865; A.S. Atkinson to C.W. Richmond, 9 February 1865, *R-A Papers*, II, 150-1, passing on comment from Harry Atkinson.
purpose and determination as Grey, independently of Cameron, cooperated with Atkinson in organising militia and bushrangers and directed colonial forces and 'friendlies' up the Wanganui river to Pipiriki. The Government took immediate steps to set up an inquiry into the purchase of the Waitotara block, an 'iniquitous job' in Cameron's opinion, while in a forthright memorandum Weld formally repudiated the General's gravest charges.

Ministers cannot but admit that it would have been for 'the profit' of the Colonists if the Lieutenant-General commanding had found it possible by vigorous action so to carry on war in the head quarters of fanaticism as to have ensured submission, and thus put a stop to a rebellion which has incalculably retarded the progress of New Zealand – which has depreciated the value of property throughout the country districts of the Northern Island, and which has placed both Islands of New Zealand in a state of the gravest financial embarrass-ment. They must also admit that the Colonists, the friendly Natives, and all who desire the welfare of this Colony, and of its inhabitants, whether of Native or European origin, would derive 'gratification' from the establishment of law, order, and peace in the place of anarchy, and the most degrading barbarism.

Reinforced in their resolution to dispense with Cameron's services so unwillingly rendered, Weld and his ministers also

91. ibid., H.A. Atkinson to A.S. Atkinson, 30 March 1865, 157-8; A.S. Atkinson Journal, 3, 13 April 1865, AT.


submitted details of their proposed colonial defence force. With the sanction of the General Assembly they would establish an armed constabulary to occupy defensive posts, to be supported as occasion demanded by friendly natives, by volunteer bushranger and cavalry corps and, in emergencies, by the whole militia of a district. The estimated size of the force was 1500 (1350 European, 150 Maori) to be divided into thirty companies, thirteen for the Auckland province, thirteen for Taranaki and Wellington, and four for the province of Hawke's Bay. In addition to the constabulary force, ministers also proposed to maintain one small steamer for service on the Waikato and occasional visits to the Patea and Wanganui rivers. The total estimated cost for the constabulary force, militia and volunteers, steamer and contingencies was £187,000; or £246,000 if men had to be enlisted from the civilian population and not, as planned, imperial permission pending, from the Regulars. 'It is submitted that a force of the nature proposed has been proved to be more effective, for the special purposes required in New Zealand, than large armies organised with a view to European warfare. Such a force at least, may, it is hoped, be within the reach of the Colony. The possession of it would entail no liability to interference in the management of our internal affairs; whilst on the other hand, New Zealand has neither the means nor the desire to retain an Imperial army.' An 'indispensable condition' of their proposed plan was the 'absolute control' of the colonial government over the whole colonial force. 94

When Cameron first ridiculed the concept of a 1500-strong colonial defence force, he had failed to appreciate that Weld and

94. ibid., Weld memorandum, 20 March 1865, A1, No.7, pp.6-9. For Colonial Office reaction, see Cox minute, n.d., on Grey to Cardwell, 1 April 1865, No.37, CO 209/189, NA.
his associates were thinking in terms of guerrilla-type warfare, not imperial style campaigns. The size of the proposed corps was not merely a reflection of pecuniary difficulties nor simply an expression of the belief that 1500 men properly trained and utilised would prove a vastly superior unit. Rather it was an indication that the Weld ministry was propounding something far more fundamental than a mere change in the scale and nature of military tactics. For as the March memorandum clearly stated, Weld envisaged a colonial constabulary, not an army. His was a peace-keeping policy for the future, when acts of aggression or rumours of unrest would be treated by the European authorities as 'civil disturbances, not occasions of war': it was not a policy which could be implemented while major outbreaks of rebellion were still likely to occur. That was why a decisive west coast campaign had been so essential to the whole future of self-reliance so conceived. Weld and his colleagues had recognised that until the Ngatiwai were suppressed, the constabulary concept had no chance of success; but the protracted west coast campaign had all but ruined prospects for its application in the near future. Pai Marire grew apace while Governor and General quarrelled.

The ministry's financial position was still precarious. It was dependent on advances from the BNZ for the means of providing for current expenditure (at the rate of nearly £60,000 per month); it was overdrawn to the extent of £250,000 – to be repaid by the sale of colonial securities, for which the market so far had proven extremely disappointing; the BNZ was threatening not to accept government cheques; and the Commissary-General had instructed that there should be no further issues.

96. On the origins of this movement, see Sinclair, History, pp.140-1.
of pay and rations to colonial forces by the imperial commissariat and was demanding immediate reimbursement for past advances. Current revenue, though rising, was absorbed by civil expenditure and provincial allocations. Further military charges would thus have to be met by loans—and New Zealand Government credit was all too obviously 'not... A 1'. Ministers therefore sought an imperial guarantee for the remainder of the three million pound loan, or an annual grant in aid of 'extra-ordinary expenditure' for the next three or four years. Grey supported the colonial government's request even to the extent of suggesting that the home authorities provide an additional million. But London officials were unable to see the advantage of a temporary accommodation to the one ministry genuinely prepared to implement its declared policy of self-reliance. By refusing to extend any further financial aid to what they regarded as an established, flourishing and advancing colony, imperial authorities prepared the way for the ministry's defeat and, ironically, ensured that advances already made to the colony through the commissariat would never be repaid beyond the £500,000 remitted by the Weld ministry early in March.


98. I.E. Featherston to Weld, 14 March 1865, Weld Papers, II, No.20.

99. Fitzherbert memorandum, 23 March 1865, AJHR, 1865, A1, No.6, p.5. Also Sewell memorandum, 4 March 1865, No.8, (Draft), PM1/4.

100. Grey to Cardwell, 8 April 1865, AJHR, 1865, A5, No.33, p.21.

101. Morrell, Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age, pp.334-5, 337.

Weld had been in office five months. He had so far achieved only one of the cardinal points of his policy — the removal of the seat of government to Wellington — and even that could hardly be regarded an unqualified success, given Grey's determination to remain in Auckland as much as possible. The financial situation had deteriorated; imperial troops had not been employed as ministers wished; confiscation in the Taranaki-Wanganui area was not fully defined, while that in the Waikato was still proving impossible either to colonise or to abandon. The Ngatiruanui remained hostile and defiant; rebellion was spreading as Pai Marire extended across the northern island to the east coast where the murder of the German missionary Carl Volkner at Opotiki on 2 March had brought a new and horrifying dimension to the nature of Maori resistance to the assertion of European authority. Yet despite his recognition of all these difficulties, Weld was more optimistic in April than he had been for months. A short time earlier he had been writing 'wearily & distrustfully' of Grey. Now all had changed — or so he thought.

Grey is really working most cordially with us. He says events have spoken out. He is much improved — much more ready to give his opinion I think really because he is in better health and spirits. He now goes in with us for the removal of troops. He behaved very well in staying at Wanganui, in great personal discomfort, at my request in order to keep us in communication with the General. The General will do nothing, wants 2000 more men from England, abuses the war, the Colonists, the Ministers & Governor in the most insulting language — a good thing for it has enabled me to convince the Governor that the sooner Cameron & the troops go the better. The Governor by our advice is now writing to the General that we

104. e.g., Weld to H.A. Atkinson, 29 March 1865.
will in future ask no more from him, but will do our
work ourselves as we can and when we can. Piperiki —
Patea — Taranaki — Waitotaru — Wanganui & Rangitikei
country .. has /sic/ been occupied by us without
asking the General. (It would have taken him a year
and 5,000 men to have gone there). I hear that in the
front they were nearly out of groceries two days!
because the Governor & Atkinson detained the small
river steamer to take the Colonial forces to Piperiki,
& of course the British officer is highly indignant.
The Independent's correspondent attacks the Governor
for dilly dallying! I wish General Cameron would
'dilly dally' to the same effect if occupying Piperiki
80 miles up the river at one bold stroke is so named ....

I am confident we have broken the neck of the
rebellion. There will be outbreaks & murders &
marauding parties about no doubt. That is always the
way after a war in a half-civilized country. But
with Grey willing to take our advice & the country I
hope not unwilling to support me if I show good cause,
& with a stout heart & a trust in GOD, I for one,
look forward not with self-sufficiency, not with rash
confidence, but with a firm hope and unshaken deter-
mination.106

Weld's idealism was blinding him to the reality of his
position. Grey would only cooperate for as long as it was in
his own best interests to do so. And however good a cause
Weld showed, it was by no means certain that the country at
large would support him. As local comment revealed, during
the five months for which the ministry had so far been in office,
neither its policy nor its personnel had met with universal
approval.

106. ibid., Extract, Weld to /Bowen/, April 1865, No.146,
enclosure in Bowen to Sefse, 15 April 1865, No.150.
For details on these military operations, see J.Cowan,
CHAPTER IX

DISILLUSIONMENT: 1865

Auckland was clearly the real stronghold of political opposition to Weld's ministry, and for a number of reasons. A minor economic recession followed the removal of the seat of government. Property sales were affected, the rate of building slowed, and a growing number of 'To Let' signs appeared in Auckland windows. Nor did the threatened removal of the troops augur well for northern economic aspirations and, so far from declining after the defeat of Graham's amendment, the demand for separation of the northern province from the rest of the colony steadily gained support as a solution to present and prospective difficulties. The old north-south antagonism was also important. Relations between men from the Wakefieldian settlements and those of the commercially-oriented north had never been particularly cordial; even less so during the reign of Whitaker and Russell. Aucklanders understandably feared that this new southern-dominated ministry would give scant consideration to northern interests.

This impression gained some credence with the growing controversy over the Waikato military settlers and the civil immigrants. Under the terms of the original agreement, the general government was to obtain the immigrants, locate them on confiscated lands, and provide employment for a reasonable length of time. Any expense incurred by the general government which was ultimately to the benefit of the provincial government would then be charged against the latter. Since it was clearly in provincial interests that expenses be kept to a minimum, Weld delegated the administration of the immigrant scheme to

1. J. Rogan to McLean, 12 December 1864; 29 March 1865, McLean MSS., F.360.
the Auckland Superintendent who, in his capacity as agent for the general government, successfully located the immigrants on their five and ten acre lots in south Auckland. But such was the ministry's financial embarrassment that the provincial authorities were asked to give greater monetary assistance to meet the expenses of the scheme. The provincial government flatly refused.²

Aucklanders had a strong case against a general government seeking to reduce its £25,000 obligation, but there can be little doubt that the northerners' determination to hold the Middle Island ministry strictly accountable was strengthened by the bitterness which Weld's other policies had already aroused. The outcome of this dispute was increased mutual antipathy between ministers and provincial authorities; general government inability to honour its commitment; and the failure of a costly immigration scheme.³

If the Otago Daily Times was at all representative of provincial opinion, the Weld ministry steadily lost support in the far south as well. Initially the paper was well disposed towards the new government, and in particular towards its premier whom it credited with possessing 'statesmanlike ability'.⁴ The

2. For all the negotiations on this issue, see 'Correspondence relative to the Maintenance and Location of Emigrants introduced into the Northern Island, under "the New Zealand Settlements Act, 1863"', AJHR, 1865, D2. Also Sewell Journal, II, 25 December 1864, pp.304-5; III, 19 January 1865, p.28; Rutherford, p.521; Weld to Mantell, 30 December 1864; 5 May 1865, Mantell MSS.; NE, 18 April 1865, p.2d-f.

3. Hamilton, passim for the fate of the scheme.

4. ODT, 3 December 1864, p.4c-d.
self-reliant policy also met with cautious approval. But the modification of its proposals was interpreted as a sign of weakness which sadly destroyed the independent tone at first assumed by Weld. Early in the new year the Times was voicing strong criticism of the removal of the seat of government, pointing not only to the expense involved but also to the ascendancy which this move reputedly gave to the Wellington party. From this point on, editorial tone hardened. Grey's non-arrival in the south was 'a joke at the expense of his faithful lieges'; the dispersion of cabinet a subject for rebuke. By the end of January Weld's resignation seemed imminent. He had allowed himself to be flattered into becoming the mouthpiece of a (Wellington) party with which, neither in political character nor in opinion, had he anything in common. Mantell's admission had given Sewell and Fitzherbert 'omnipotent power'; Richardson 'of course' would join the stronger faction; of Atkinson nothing need be said - 'he has only one idea and that is Taranaki'. Weld was isolated, powerless to act, yet responsible. So insisted the Otago oracle, without however producing any real evidence to support such conclusions.

His criticisms possibly reflecting local fears that Dunedin would not be chosen as the port of call for the proposed Panama mail service, the Times' editorialist made Richardson his principal target of attack. The Postmaster-General's imposition of a penny postage tax on colonial newspapers did nothing to improve his standing: it was construed as an

5. 12 December 1864, p.4c-d.
6. 13 December 1864, p.4c-d; 16 December 1864, p.4c-e.
7. 9 January 1865, p.4d-e.
8. 14 January 1865, p.4d.
9. 31 January 1865, p.4d-f.
expression of personal hostility towards a paper allegedly responsible in some measure for Richardson's failure to be re-elected Superintendent. 10

This southern paper grew steadily more hostile towards the Government. With ministers 'like so many birds flying about the colony' it was impossible to tell what they had and had not done 'since each individually seems to be doing what he likes'. This was the complaint early in February; while the state of affairs on the west coast was remarked upon as being in direct opposition to the ministry's declared intention of an economical campaign. 11 Even news that Weld had repealed the newspaper tax failed to appease. It merely confirmed the editor in his opinion that Richardson was unfit to hold ministerial office. 12 But the principal strictures against the Government were that Weld had practically given the colony two governments by not insisting on Grey's presence in Wellington; and that he had fallen victim to the machinations of Wellingtonians who had realised Weld's business commitments would make him reluctant to reside in Auckland. 13 This last charge was particularly fallacious since all that Weld had done was to give effect to the resolution of the House during the previous session to abide by the decision of the independent commission set up to select the most suitable site for the colonial capital.

Both in Auckland and in Otago then, there was a solid bloc of opposition to Weld's ministry, and this was to manifest itself in no uncertain terms when the Assembly next met. Ten

10. 1 February 1865, p.4c-d. See LT, 14 February 1865, p.4b; 16 February p.4d-e for details of the mail service as proposed in the legislation of 1864.
11. ODT, 16 February 1865, p.5g.
12. 25 February 1865, p.4c-e.
13. 4 March 1865, p.4c-d.
years earlier an Auckland-Otago combination spearheaded by Wakefield had precipitated a ministerial defeat: this time Stafford would lead the attack.

The controversy between Weld and his former colleague seems to have developed out of sheer pique on Stafford's part. During a public address in Nelson, Stafford implied that Weld had virtually tricked him out of office. The *Nelson Examiner* took Stafford to task for exaggeration, but Weld felt constrained to request an explanation.

My dear Stafford,

When I met you in Canterbury you gave me a copy of the report of a speech made by you at a public meeting in Nelson on the 5th Jany last - There are several statements in that speech which I shall be ready to controvert at the proper time & place but I cannot allow your statement that I offered you the Premiershipt to pass without contradiction, for reasons that I then gave you at length, & in which you appeared to me to concur. I especially restricted my offer to any office you might select excepting the premiership - I stated that I could have no personal objection to take office under you but that under the present circumstances I could not offer you the premiership without as it would have appeared to me a .../illegible/ of my own duty. Reflection will probably recall to your mind the reasons which I gave, and as I am anxious not to be represented as having taken a step which I still believe would under existing circumstances have been a very improper one for me to have taken I feel sure that you will take the earliest convenient opportunity of setting me right in this matter before the public.

Stafford replied:

I very much regret that I should - as it would appear - have misapprehended your meaning when you proposed to me to take office with you last session. I certainly did understand you to state that if I did so any post was open to me - including the premiership. During our

14. NE, 11 January 1865, p.7a-f for Stafford's speech in full.
15. 10 January 1865, p.2d-f.
16. Weld to Stafford, 7 February 1865, (Draft), Weld Papers, II, No.16.
discussion on the subject I instanced - amongst other reasons which made me unwilling to take office - that there were in the Assembly two political opponents of mine who would not like to see me take office - that consequently were I to do so an element of dissent, which it was not desirable should arise at that crisis, might be evoked. To this you replied - in effect - that I overrated any such feeling, for you had heard the question discussed by some of 'my old opponents and that they were not averse to my being in office - 'tho' they might not like me to be premier - but I distinctly understood you to differ from them as to the latter position - indeed I could not otherwise have given any meaning to your expression that I was the only man in New Zealand you would serve under....

It is superfluous, after our long political as well as social intimacy, & general agreement as to political principles & sentiments for me to say how much I desire your success in your present post. I mean this personally, however, for there is a portion of your ministry and its surroundings as to which I have never concealed from you or others that I want confidence but apart from all private & personal considerations, a change of ministry now is to be deprecated for the effect it would have as much without as within the Colony unless - indeed - it should be necessitated from an inability to work with Sir G Grey, in which case it might not in the long run be altogether an evil.17

Weld determined this time to leave no room for future misunderstanding.

My dear Stafford,

I am obliged to you for your letter and regret your misunderstanding - I said that I could have no objection on personal grounds to serve under you, that as parties had stood you were the only man that I could well serve under (though there are many that otherwise I would serve under) but that my offering you the premiership was rendered impossible by the circumstances & for the reasons that I went on to recapitulate & that I consequently did not offer it. In this view I understood you fully to concur & to say that it was not on account of any objection to serving under me but of difference of opinion abt the seat of govt question that you based yr refusal to join my govt.

17. Stafford to Weld, 27 February 1865, Weld MSS., No.9.
It is a pity that having understood me otherwise you did not contradict me when I made my statement to the House - I regret too that you should have thought it necessary even had you been correct in your understanding publicly to repeat a conversation in a form so damaging thereby rendering impossible in future any unguarded political communication between us. It is not my wish to provoke any private controversies upon this or other subjects. I therefore say no more though on consideration I have thought it best to say this much lest there should be any uncertainty as to our future political relations.\(^{18}\)

Canterbury remained the stronghold of Weld's support. His accession to power had been warmly applauded, the one fear voiced being that, given the furor in Auckland, the Government might not be strong enough to carry through a policy almost too good to be true.\(^{19}\) The Press remained constant in its allegiance, commending the ministry's firm approach to Auckland over the immigration issue,\(^{20}\) chastising Grey for adding to ministerial difficulties by refusing to leave Auckland to reside at Wellington,\(^{21}\) pointing to the occupation of Pipiriki by colonial forces as yet further proof of the uselessness of going to vast expense to keep the regular army in the colony.\(^{22}\)

The Lyttleton Times was similarly consistent in its support. Even before Weld had taken office, that paper had pointed to the need for a new ministry which would consider southern interests - and not be extravagant with southern monies.\(^{23}\)

---

18. Weld to Stafford, 4 April 1865 (Draft), ibid., No.13.
19. Press, 8 December 1864, p.2c; 14 December 1864, p.2f.
20. 29 December 1864, p.2b-c; 15 February 1865, p.3b-c; 25 April 1865, p.2c-d.
21. 24 February 1865, p.2a-b.
22. 13 April 1865, p.2c.
23. LT, 27 October 1864, p.4c-d.
Weld's cabinet suited the editor's requirements, and the publication of the acrimonious Fox-Whitaker-Grey correspondence further enhanced his standing by contrast. But though Weld's policy was upheld in the south, the Lyttleton commentator found Auckland's reaction extremely disquieting and feared that the 'perfect storm of opposition' would affect some of Weld's less resolute supporters. There were rumours that Fitzherbert would not remain staunch on the policy of dispensing with the troops, and that the Wellington representatives might well play the Middle Island false on this. It was possible therefore that Fitzherbert's inclusion in the cabinet might prove to be a source of weakness and embarrassment to his colleagues. The other portfolio holders met with approval. Mantell's accession to the ministry was well received and the Government commended for losing no time in initiating policy, particularly with regard to confiscation and the Waikato regiments. But the geographical separation of the executive and the state of the west coast campaign were viewed with concern. A reduction of expense and a rapid, overwhelming succession of movements between Wanganui and Taranaki were essential for the ministry's and the colony's future. 'If it does not then clearly promise entire success, there will be no rational course open but to abandon the campaign; and perhaps the policy of which it forms a part.'

24. 1 December 1864, p.4c.
25. 3 December 1864, p.4c.
26. 13 December 1864, p.4c.
27. 15 December 1864, p.4e-f.
28. 14 January 1865, p.4e.
29. 7 February 1865, p.4c-d; 11 February 1865, p.5d.
The *Nelson Examiner* was also generally well-disposed towards the ministry. Weld himself had certainly received a glowing commendation, and this personal support never faltered, though the actions of his associates, notably Richardson's newspaper tax, did not always appeal.

Auckland commentators aside, North Island papers were for the most part favourable in their reactions to the Weld ministry. The *Taranaki Herald* not unnaturally backed a premier who had declared his willingness to lose half his income in taxes rather than allow the settlers of Taranaki to be left in their 'present miserable condition'. His ministry was seen as one which would be animated by a spirit of justice towards Taranaki in particular. Reports that Weld could be out of office through insisting on the immediate removal of the troops were received with alarm, news of the subsequent modifications with considerable relief. 'It would have been impossible to have found another man to fill Mr Weld's place, having at once the full confidence of the Assembly and a fair chance of being able to work with Sir George Grey.'

From the columns of the *Wellington Independent* can be gleaned an impression of overall, though not overwhelming.

30. *NE*, 3 December 1864, p.2e-f: 'It is impossible, we will venture to assert, to find a man in the colony who is more universally respected.' The editor had distinct reservations about Sewell, however. 1 December 1864, Supplement, p.1a-d.
31. 11 January 1865, p.5a-b.
33. 3 December 1864, p.2d-e.
34. 7 December 1864, p.1b-c.
35. 17 December 1864, p.2f.
support. While the general tenor of policy was approved, the editor correctly anticipated the amendment of the self-reliant resolutions. A large number of southern members, he prophesied, would not be prepared to pay for a colonial force if at the same time they were 'saddled with an immense debt for the Imperial blunders of the past'. But over confiscation, the Wellington Independent argued, Weld and his colleagues owed a great deal to their predecessors. 'Unless taught by the experience of the past Sir George Grey would not have confiscated the Waikato, or again put forth a proclamation stating his intention of pacificating the Island, if need be, by force.'

The New Zealand Spectator for its part was unequivocally behind Weld himself and on the whole approved his policy in these first few months of the new ministry's rule, agreeing with the New-Zealander that the colony required an application of administrative ability guided by high-minded integrity, and now seemed to have both.

On the east coast, however, the Hawke's Bay Herald was not convinced that the advent of self-reliance was altogether a good thing. When details of Weld's resolutions

36. WI, 10 December 1864, p.2f, p.3a.
37. 12 January 1865, p.2f.
38. NZS, 30 November 1864, p.2d-e; 7 December 1864, p.2c-e; 14 December 1864, p.2d-e; 31 December 1864, p.2d-e; 18 February 1865, p.2e-f.
39. New Zealander, 29 November 1864, cit. NZS, 10 December 1864, p.3b.
reached that province, the editor promptly declared his hope that the ministry was no longer in office.  

Weld as a politician was held in high regard; but an application of his policy would be detrimental if not destructive to the interests of the North Island. And for the next few months, the activities of the 'scratch ministry' were viewed with an increasingly critical, though not yet hostile, gaze.

Personal contemporary comment extant is limited. Jane Atkinson was not surprised to hear of Harry's being in as Defence Minister; 'nor shall I be surprised to hear as things are that you are out again by the next steamer. The New Ministry seems to be generally considered a queer combination.'  

Arthur Atkinson observed: 'You will agree that they have done well in picking out Weld, Harry and Major Richardson to do the work, but what do you think of the crablike old Sewellus and the denouncer of the unholy war of 1860 (Fitzherbert) as allies?'. J.C. Richmond thought Weld rash in taking in Sewell; 'and now he has added Mantell who is as crochety as Sewell is slippery, and has no great amount of work in him'. William Atkinson was far more scathing. 'In conclusion, he wrote to his brother, 'let me congratulate you on the great accession of weakness to your Cabinet by the appointment of Mantell'. He is

---

40. _HBH_, 6 December 1864, p.4b.
41. 10 December 1864, p.3a-b; 9 February 1865, p.1e.
42. Jane Atkinson to H.A. Atkinson, 1 December 1864; 7 December 1864, H.A. Atkinson MSS.
43. A.S. Atkinson to Emily Richmond, 18 December 1864, _R-A Papers_, II, 133.
44. _Ibid._, J.C. Richmond to C.W. Richmond, 22 December 1864, 134.
widely celebrated for his laziness, and generally considered ... a great political humbug." FitzGerald on the other hand was very pleased to hear that Mantell was 'in harness' and urged him to 'throw off that persiflage' which made people think he looked upon everything as a joke. There was no one in New Zealand with such clear, honest and rational emotions as Mantell possessed, no one as able to carry them out. 'But people don't generally think so'. Nor was FitzGerald to do so for long. Crochie Ward similarly sent Mantell congratulations, partly, he declared, because he had never seen a more melancholy sight than Mantell trying to look as if he enjoyed idleness, and also because it would relieve some of the pressure from Weld. J.D. Ormond, however, was less pleased with the news. As he informed McLean: 'I do not approve of Mantell as Native Minister altho a great friend of his. He is too crochety.'

Gore Browne in Tasmania was hopeful that Weld would be able to improve the present condition of the colony. 'He is a perfect gentleman & an honest man & as such is deserving of implicit confidence - I like the short programme I have seen of

45. loc. cit. W.S. Atkinson to H.A. Atkinson, 23 December 1864.
46. FitzGerald to Mantell, 28 December 1864, Mantell MSS.
47. ibid., Crobie Ward to Mantell, 2 January 1865. Note also H.A. Atkinson to A.S. Atkinson, 3 January 1865, R.A. Papers, II, 142: 'We were obliged to take in Mantell because Weld was completely done up and he has great faith in Mantell ... I felt very grave doubts as to the wisdom of taking him at first but now I am getting ... quite satisfied.' Sewell Journal, II, 17 December 1864, p. 296; 'a man of ability, but rather dilettanti'.
his views very much. But at least one New Zealand commentator had serious misgivings. Mathew Richmond, now a Legislative Councillor, did not like Weld's impression of 'Sir George's doings'; 'he appears, fatal delusion, to have confidence in him and blames Sir D. Cameron more than the Governor, he says the General is as bad as either Generals Pratt or Gold.' On returning from his short visit to Wellington, Richmond was 'more convinced ... than ever' that Weld would be 'tripped up soon'; 'if Sir George does not do it, Featherston will. No one doubts that he pulls the strings of Govt now and when it suits his purpose he will overthrow Weld - it is very sad that New Zealand should be doomed to have these conflicts so frequently.'

David Monro shared Richmond's apprehension.

The greatest difficulty of the present ministry must be the want of money. Where they are getting it I do not know unless it be from the Bank of NZd. I really cannot see what is to become of us. Some people are very sanguine about the proceeds of the confiscated lands. But it is impossible to suppose that these lands either in the Waikato or Taranaki will ever attract capitalists until there is some security for life in the colony, which there is not at the present time. Unless we can get money somewhere we must inevitably be stranded before


50. M. Richmond to Gore Browne, 31 March 1865, Gore Browne MSS., No. 36, GB 1/3.
long on the rocks of insolvency. Unless indeed the existing arrangements between the Genl & Provincial Govts be entirely set aside and the land fund of the Middle Island sacrificed. I hear that Weld gets on smoothly with Sir Geo Grey. I have an impression notwithstanding that Weld will be tripped up some day. If it is in Grey's interests to be on good terms with Weld, it will be all right. If otherwise the result will be very different.  

It in fact remained very much in Grey's interests to be on good terms with his ministers during the next few months, for in mid-April the ill feeling between Governor and General became on open breach: Cameron informed Grey that he was forwarding copies of their supposedly private correspondence to the War Office. Now back in Auckland Grey immediately broke off personal contact with the General. When Cameron returned to Headquarters with the declared intent of seeking further instructions from Grey, the Governor refused to see him. Coldly he advised Cameron that he would consult with his responsible ministers on the matter: 'Our impression however was that the instructions already issued were sufficient, and I am aware that they participate with me in an earnest wish that the Colony should for the future, in as far as possible, carry on active operations from its own resources, as we believe that if it can only have such operations carried on by being at the

51. ibid., Monro to Harriet Gore Browne, 8 April 1865, No.38, GB 1/3.
52. Cameron to Grey, 9 April 1865, AJHR, 1865, A4, No.68, p.25.
53. ibid., Grey to Cameron, 17 April 1865, A4, No.73, p.26.
54. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 1 May 1865, A4, No.82, pp.30-31.
same time subjected to such imputations as those contained in your recent letters, it would be for many reasons better that it should attempt to extricate itself from its difficulties by relying on its own resources, energies and courage.  

If Cameron was suspicious at this remarkable accord between Governor and ministers, he soon discovered its basis when he read Grey’s memoranda of 4 March and Weld’s reply of 20 March, released by the ministry for local publication. Furious at Grey’s underhand action, Cameron promptly informed him that copies of these memoranda would also be sent to the home authorities, ‘that they may know what your Excellency, in concert with the Colonial Ministers, was doing behind my back, whilst I was engaged in operations in the field’.  

But Cameron at this stage failed to appreciate the extent to which Grey had misused their correspondence to his own advantage. Angered by the General’s letter of 30 March, which accused Grey and Mantell in particular of a culpable disregard for the loss of British life in their eagerness to have the Weraroa pa attacked, and possibly suspecting that Cameron was already sending home adverse reports, Grey on 7 April had again sought to reinforce his position with the colonial

55. ibid., Grey to Cameron, 1 May 1865, A4, No.83, p.31. Mantell and Atkinson were in itinerant attendance at Auckland during this period, so that an executive council meeting could be held if necessary. Weld to Grey, 25 April 1865, Private, Grey MSS., W 26, No.3; ibid., Weld to Grey, 13 May 1865, No.4.

56. Cameron to Grey, 3 May 1865, AJHR,1865,A4, No.86,pp.31-32.

57. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 30 March 1865, A4, No.60, pp.21-22.

58. In his letter of 28 January, for instance, Cameron had stated: 'The Government at home ought to be made acquainted with the true history of the business' - an allusion to the Waitotara purchase.
government by disclosing more of Cameron's criticisms. It was at this point that Grey, concerned above all with his own reputation, became temporarily a staunch advocate of self-reliance, as he urged his ministers to dispense entirely with imperial military aid.\(^{59}\) Weld obliged. Expressing his regret that the Lieutenant-General should have thought fit to attribute such base and unworthy motives to ministers and Governor, Weld formally minuted that it was 'impossible longer to accept assistance so unwillingly rendered. Nor indeed can it be hoped that the zeal and energy (which alone can secure success or lead to any useful result in operations in the field) will be displayed by any officer, however distinguished, in support of a cause which is branded by him with such severe reprobation.'\(^{60}\)

Despite the alignment of Governor and Government against him, Cameron was in the stronger position. He had been forwarding critical reports even before the Weld ministry took office and the imperial authorities had already acted upon them. Despatches and private correspondence written between January and March reaffirmed that Grey could confiscate land only after consultations with the General, and assumed that he had sanctioned no operations in Taranaki which Cameron had not approved. In accordance with the ministry's self-reliant resolutions, London officials had also arranged for the issue of orders to Cameron for the withdrawal of five battalions, those instructions removing from Grey and giving to his General the discretionary authority to decide when the troops

---


60. ibid., Weld memorandum, 8 April 1865, A1, No.12, p.11. See also Weld to Grey, 14 April 1865, Grey MSS., W 26, No.2.
could be withdrawn with safety and without detriment to the ends of imperial policy.  

At first Cameron certainly did not assume that his authority could be exercised independently of gubernatorial wishes. He submitted his proposals for approval:  

Grey declined to interfere. Yet when Cameron then inferred that he held the entire responsibility for deciding the time and manner of carrying out the proposed reduction and intimated that he would proceed at once to arrange the immediate withdrawal of the 65th Regiment and the further reduction of four regiments,  

Grey promptly announced that in matters affecting the safety of a part of Her Majesty's possessions and the security of the lives and properties of her subjects, he would act on his own initiative without reference to his responsible advisers to determine the distribution of forces which would in his opinion best secure the safety of the colony. Ironically, as Cameron now sought to give effect to the ministry's declared policy of self-reliance, the Governor was thwarting it.

In one respect Grey's attitude was justifiable. After months of indecisive action, ostensibly because of inadequate forces, it seemed curious that troops which could now with impunity be withdrawn from the colony could not first be amassed for a final attack on the Weraroa pa, for until that symbol of resistance was captured, there could be no peace on the west

62. Cameron to Grey, 9 May 1865, AJHR, 1865, A4, No.92, p.33.
63. ibid., Grey to Cameron, 11 May 1865, A4, No.97, p.35.
64. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 12 May 1865, A4, No.98, pp.35-36.
65. ibid., Grey to Cameron, 12 May 1865, A4, No.99, p.36.
coast. Cameron remained bitterly opposed to Grey's manoeuvrings, particularly after 15 May when the further publication of ministerial memoranda revealed the extent of Grey's disclosures on 7 April, made ten days before the Governor knew that Cameron was forwarding their correspondence to the War Office. Somewhat disconcerted by the exposure, Grey nevertheless upheld his stated opinions and continued to insist that an assault on the Weroara was essential before the troops could be withdrawn. Cameron denied that this was adequate reason for their detention. As Rutherford has noted, the real difficulty about an attack was political, not military. An inconclusive west coast campaign had been the General's most effective means of preventing further confiscation. This end he remained determined to achieve.

While Governor and General wrangled, bringing formal military operations in the Wanganui district to a standstill, ministers in Wellington were not completely inactive. With the Assembly due to meet at the end of June, there were numerous bills to prepare. 'I begin to fear that we may go through the session, and so I may be tied by the leg for another year,'

66. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 15 May 1865, A4, No.104, p.38; 18 May 1865, A4, No.107, p.39. On this point, Rutherford, p.530, is misleading, since he implies that Grey revealed Cameron's letters to the ministry only after the General's letter of 9 April was received (17 April) whereas, as shown above, Grey had been skilfully exploiting this correspondence before that time.


68. ibid., Cameron to Grey, 26 May 1865, A4, No.117, pp.44-47.

69. p.534.
Sewell bemoaned. But the impasse at Auckland seriously affected government prospects, for the record of self-reliance in the inter-sessional period was scarcely impressive. Both in Hawke's Bay and in the Wairarapa there had been some action without consultation with imperial military authorities, special constabulary forces having been formed from local settlers, and friendly natives armed as a counteract against further Hauhau insurgency. At Kakaramea on 13 May the colonially-recruited Forest Rangers led by the colourful adventurer, Gustavus von Tempsky, had been successful in a bush battle against rebel forces. In Taranaki also there had been some action which Weld felt fully vindicated ministerial military policy, though this was at some personal cost to the imperial commander concerned.

71. Rutherford, p.534; Sewell Journal, III, 18 March 1865, p.114. Correspondence on these activities is scattered in Weld's papers, and I have grouped references in this footnote simply according to location. Weld to Grey, 25 March 1865, No.21; J.V. Smith to Weld, 3 May 1865, No.25; Weld to N.R. Leatham, 9 June 1865 (Draft confidential) attached to Leatham to Weld, 16 June 1865, No.28; J.V. Smith to Weld, 20 June 1865, No.29, Weld Papers, II. Weld to McLean, 15 March 1865, No.6; Weld to Ormond, 23 March 1865, No.7, McLean MSS., F.408. Ormond to Weld, 8 March 1865, No.10; McLean to Weld, 18 March 1865, No.11; McLean to Weld, 5 May 1865, No.19; C.D.R. Ward to Weld, 4 May 1865, No.17; 7 May 1865, No.20; 8 May 1865, No.22; 9 May 1865, No.23; 10 May 1865, No.24; 11 May 1865, No.25; Ward to Fitzherbert, 16 May 1865, No.29, Weld MSS.
Colonel Warre had been sympathetic from the start towards the Weld ministry's military objectives, and had supported the calculation that the west coast campaign need only be small-scale and short-lived. 73 Cameron, however, had objected strongly to Warre's close liaison with the colonial government, with Atkinson in particular. At first Grey had upheld his General's objections, 74 but as his own relations with Cameron deteriorated, he came increasingly to support Warre's tendency to act independently of his superior. Although Warre's original offer of a flying column was vetoed by Cameron, the Governor apparently secured Cameron's subsequent agreement to a similar scheme while at Patea. But with probably deliberate oversight, Cameron left for Auckland at the end of April without issuing the actual orders. Warre had gone ahead nevertheless. Acting on a Grey-Atkinson communication and in concert with the Defence Minister, Warre established redoubts at Pukearuhe, thirty miles to the north of New Plymouth, and at Warea and Opunake in the south. 75 His activity extended the length of Taranaki coastline occupied to eighty-five miles; effectually ridiculed Cameron's opinion that such an undertaking would be hazardous without large-scale reinforcement; and was to facilitate contact with an outpost of Cameron's forces at Waingongoro (8 June), thus temporarily reopening the coast road between Wanganui and New Plymouth closed to Europeans

74. ibid., p.81.
since 1860. For so using his initiative, Warre earned himself the heartfelt gratitude of the colonial government, and the grave displeasure of Sir Duncan Cameron.

A further attempt to give effect to ministerial plans was frustrated by imperial military authorities. After his victory at Kakaramea, von Tempsky, with Weld's sanction, turned his attention to the Weraroa pa. But plans conceived in Wellington proved impracticable in the field. Just when the occupants of Weraroa were reputedly on the point of surrendering to the combined force of Forest Rangers, Wanganui volunteers and native allies (22 June) Colonel Logan, government agent but also senior military officer at Wanganui, intervened on Brigadier General Waddy's orders and insisted that no terms of surrender could be settled without the involvement of British officers. Negotiations with the rebels promptly lapsed.

76. Cowan, pp.55-56.
77. See Weld to Atkinson, 4 May 1865, H.A.Atkinson MSS: 'You & Warre seem in the language of a French Bulletin to have been "covering yourselves with glory"....If the General would only go away we might do something. However Warre's action will restore the prestige the Genl's inaction has lost at Wanganui & which has neutralized even the Piperiki /sic/ success to a great extent, at least for a time.' Also Weld to Mantell, 5 May 1865, Mantell MSS.
78. Rutherford, p.532; Dalton, p.229, footnote 79 for additional references, but see Warre to Gore Browne, 5 July 1865, Gore Browne MSS., No.45, GB 1/3, for the commander's own explanation.
79. Von Tempsky to Weld, 5 June 1865, No.38; 12 June 1865, No.42; 17 June 1865, No.54; C.Rookes to Weld, 5 June 1865, No.39; Logan to Weld, 7 June 1865, No.40, Weld MSS.
Colonial forces were prevented from mounting an independent frontal attack. The pa remained in rebel hands.

When Grey returned to Wellington on 21 June he lost little time in laying before his ministers copies of his recent exchanges with Cameron. Obviously prejudiced, Weld accepted Grey's interpretation of Cameron's new discretionary powers, condemned the General's refusal to attack the Weraroa, and reiterated the Government's desire for the immediate withdrawal of the troops. Then came news of Logan's intervention and the frustration of colonial endeavours to capture the pa. 'This is exasperating in the highest degree' exploded Sewell. 'The incapacity of our military operations, and at the same time the petty and contemptible jealousy of the military authorities towards all things Colonial is scarcely credible.'

For Weld, news of this fiasco was decisive. On 12 July he announced his intention of resigning when the Assembly eventually met (its opening having been postponed till 24 July because of

80. Rutherford, p.535; Dalton, pp.231-2; Von Tempsky to Weld, 24 June 1865, enclosure No.3 in Grey to Cardwell, 13 July 1865, AJHR, 1865, A5, No.58, p.65.

81. ibid., Weld memorandum, 26 June 1865, A1, No.26, pp.16-17. Note also Weld to Grey, 19 June 1865, Grey MSS., W 26, No.6; and Weld to McLean, 3 July 1865, Private and Confidential, McLean MSS., F.408, No.9: 'The memoranda between Cameron & Grey are very long & very furious the memos of the Govt I am glad to say few short & I hope sweet.'

82. Sewell Journal, III, 10 July 1865, p.187. Note also J.C.Richmond to Mary Richmond, 28 June 1865, R-A Papers, II, 167; A.S.Atkinson Journal, 3 July 1865: 'The news from Wellington is that the Wereroa pa would have been given up by the natives or taken but for Col.Logan's jealousy or stupidity. There is a great row about it.'
building delays). His course was rendered necessary, he
minuted;

not on account of any difference of opinion between
Ministers and the Governor, whose constitutional
support and whose efforts on behalf of the Colony they
gratefully acknowledge — not from any doubt of the
approval of the Assembly — nor because there is cause
to fear the result of their policy were it allowed full
scope — but because an irresponsible authority unknown
to the constitution is maintained, which only leaves to
the Colony a nominal responsibility and a large money
liability whilst it effectually deprives it of self-
government.

It would be easy to assume that Weld was simply making
the most of a good opportunity to relieve himself of what was
becoming an almost unbearable burden of responsibility. He
could well have been excused for doing so. But Weld's stated
motives were his genuine ones. The ministry's constitutional
position was ludicrous. The old double government to which
Weld had objected so strongly had become an unprecedented
triple division of authority: responsible government under these
conditions was a farce and incompatible with the policy with
which Weld had taken office. Sewell likewise had been
outraged at the implications of the imperial despatch giving
Cameron discretionary authority over the troops withdrawal.
'Of all the imbroglios into which the Government of the Colony
has as yet fallen', he had exclaimed, 'this is I think the most
complicated and dangerous.' What they now had was a triple

83. Weld to Grey, 13 May 1865; Weld to Grey, 19 June 1865;
ODT, 27 June 1865, p.4d-e interpreted the delay as evidence
of the ministry's 'anti-constitutional principles'.

84. Weld memorandum, 12 July 1865, AJHR, 1865, A1, No.34,
p.21 cf. NZS, 19 July 1865, p.2d-e which dismissed as
'without foundation' a rumour of the ministry's impending
resignation.
if not quadruple system of government - Downing Street, Governor, General and Ministers - with ministry and Assembly liable for all the blunders and the expenses of imperial mismanagement but without an effective voice in the direction of their own affairs. 85

Then, a mere two days before the Assembly opened, came Secretary of State Cardwell's despatch of 26 April formally commending and accepting the self-reliant resolutions as the declared policy of the colonial government. Only the receipt of this communication together with the news of Cameron's resignation induced Weld to rescind his own decision and to stay in office. 86

This long-awaited and unqualified imperial support was a considerable triumph for Weld and his ministry, yet it was by no means certain that the House would be prepared to support his policy, or that the Government would be strong enough to uphold it. Weld's health was breaking under the strain of office. The appointment of J.C.Richmond as Colonial Secretary in June had been as much an attempt to relieve Weld personally as an effort to increase departmental administrative efficiency. 87

86. Weld memorandum, 24 July 1865, AJHR, 1865, A1, No.36, p.22; J.C.Richmond to Mary Richmond, 28 July 1865, R-A Papers, II, 171; Rutherford, p.536.
87. Memorandum ʃn.aʃ to Weld, 27 May 1865, No.32; J.C. Richmond to Weld, 1 June 1865, No.34; Weld to Richmond, 6 June 1865, No.35; Weld MSS. J.C.Richmond to C.W.Richmond, 11 June 1865, R-A Papers, II, 163; A.S.Atkinson Journal, 13 June 1865; Jane Atkinson to Mary Richmond, 18 June 1865, R-A Papers, II, 164: 'What is your feeling about James's joining the Ministry? I am afraid it will be too anxious and nagging a life for him, tho' I dare say the companionship of a man like Mr Weld will be wholesome and nourishing to his mind.' For press reactions to Richmond's appointment, see LT, 1 July 1865, p.4d-e; NP, 4 July 1865, p.2d-e; ODT, 8 July 1865, p.4c-d.
But when the House was again in session, the pressure would be on Weld once more, and it was essential for the future of the ministry that he remain in charge of affairs. In his own unobtrusive fashion it was Weld who held the cabinet together. Without his quiet control, its disparate elements would soon conflict.

Mantell's resignation, prompted in the final analysis by a dispute with Cameron, removed one potential source of difficulty. Despite predictions to the contrary, his tenure of office had been but a limited success. FitzGerald admitted to disappointment; Ormond in the Hawke's Bay had been particularly scathing about the minister's performance. He no longer expected anything practical from Mantell, Ormond informed McLean as early as March, not in the least placated by Weld's reassurance that Mantell's intention was at first to ascertain the best means of implementing the Native Lands Act. 'Why on earth have you proclaimed the Native Lands Act as in force - whilst at the same time you carefully guard against any possibility of its being worked by ignoring the necessity of the necessary machinery to work it?' was Ormond's
irate rejoinder. Of even more concern to those on the east coast was the apparent lack of any decided government policy for dealing with the Hau hau. 'If Ministers were absolutely dead we could not hear less from them than we do', Ormond complained, and without clear direction, he informed Mantell, government agents in different parts of the colony would pursue entirely different courses ' & the bad results of this cannot be overestimated'. But this particular problem as Weld saw it was also one of punishing Pai Marire without at the same time persecuting religion— not an issue readily resolved.

The 'hazy' nature of Mantell's views on native policy for the forthcoming session had worried Sewell, as did Atkinson's apparent vagueness. 'Upon the two cardinal points of our policy, we have as yet no settled views; and shall meet the Assembly unprepared,' he noted in June. 'This is the danger which now threatens our existence.' Sewell's strictures on

92. Ormond to Mantell, 26 April 1865, Mantell MSS., F.357.

93. Ormond to McLean, 26 April 1865, McLean MSS., F.326, No.51.

94. Ormond to Mantell, 26 April 1865.

95. See Mantell to Weld, 11 April 1865, Mantell MSS.; C.D.R, Ward to Weld, 19/17 April 1865, Weld MSS., No.15; A.S.Atkinson Journal, 17 April 1865; Ormond to McLean, 3 May 1865, McLean MSS., F.326, No.52.


Mantell were fair, his criticism of Atkinson less so, since it would have been an extraordinarily difficult task to formulate a coherent policy for the colonial government while military affairs were in such a state of irregular direction. 98

But Sewell was not the only minister uncertain as to the Government's prospects. Newly installed in the Colonial Secretary's office, James Richmond observed: 'It is oppressive to feel the weakness of the Genl. Government when the utmost vigor is needed. One is performing a sort of egg dance upon percussion shells of very lively kinds....' 99 The financial outlook was 'gloomy', the Governor 'a curious being'. 'His manner is gentle and amiable to a marvellous degree but one remembers the claws under the velvet.' 100 Mantell's resignation was viewed with a sense of regret due only in part to the consequent increase in the work load of colleagues already 'abundantly employed'. 101 'He is a good honorable fellow but too sensitive for pushing through the briars of official life', Richmond concluded. 102 For Harry Atkinson, however, the increased pressure of work might well have been a welcome solace, his wife having died suddenly in his absence from Taranaki. 'My loss at times seems almost too much for me', he confessed privately to Arthur Atkinson. 'I am very much

98. cf. Dalton, pp.224-5 who argues that this situation need never have arisen.
100. ibid., J.C.Richmond to Mary Richmond, 28 June 1865, 167.
101. ibid., J.C.Richmond to Mary Richmond, 18 July 1865, 169.
102. ibid., J.C.Richmond to C.W.Richmond, 24 July 1865, 170.
inclined to leave politics, but I don't see how I can do so at the present time with honor.\textsuperscript{103}

In the three months prior to the opening of the Assembly, provincial press opinion was predominantly in the ministry's favour, Auckland and Otago excepted. The publication of Cameron's 'profit and gratification' charges together with Weld's unequivocal replies and the outlines of ministerial policy worked generally to the Government's advantage.\textsuperscript{104} Similarly the Grey-Cameron rupture and Weld's memorandum of 8 April further increased Weld's prestige.\textsuperscript{105} But though the Nelson Examiner was convinced that the colony generally had confidence in Weld, and while the Taranaki Herald insisted that the ministry would have majority support, none could deny that there were considerable - and increasing - doubts over the feasibility of self-reliance as a practicable substitute for imperial aid. Could a defence force of the size proposed in the ministerial memorandum of 20 March be adequate for colonial needs, particularly in view of the growing strength of Hau hau fanaticism?\textsuperscript{107}

\textsuperscript{103} ibid., H.A. Atkinson to A.S. Atkinson, 8 July 1865, 168.

\textsuperscript{104} WL, 29 April 1865, p.3a-d; 4 May 1865, p.2f; NZS, 3 May 1865, p.2d-e; 6 May 1865, p.2d; LT, 4 May 1865, p.4b-c; HBH, 13 May 1865, p.2c-d; NE, 2 May 1865, p.2e-f; cf. ODT, 1 May 1865, p.4c-d repudiated in NE, 11 May 1865, p.5e.

\textsuperscript{105} LT, 16 May 1865, p.4e; HBH, 18 May 1865, p.1d-e; TH, 27 May 1865, p.2f; NE, 1 June 1865, p.2e-f.

\textsuperscript{106} NE, 4 July 1865, p.2d-e; TH, 8 July 1865, p.2d-e.

\textsuperscript{107} HBH, 20 April 1865, p.1d; NE, 2 May 1865, p.2e-f.
The *Hawke's Bay Herald*, for one, was distinctly dubious. Moreover, another vital question still remained unanswered. In view of the expensive bungling over the west coast campaign, how were the projected colonial military expenses to be met? As the *Otago Daily Times* not unreasonably pointed out, if it were madness to think that the colony could cope with the Hau hau difficulty, it was worse than madness for it to undertake such a responsibility 'on the mere hope of Imperial assistance, after formally absolving the Home country from any obligation to render it'.

Canterbury papers were disposed generously to applaud the ministry's achievements to date. Should Weld's government leave office tomorrow, the *Press* noted in May, it would have made its mark on the country as no government had done for years - at least for good. The dismissal of the troops, the establishment of the Panama mail route, and the publication of government accounts were all measures deserving of credit. And if column comment was an accurate reflection of colonial opinion, then news of the improved tone of British parliamentary debates on New Zealand affairs was greeted with widespread satisfaction. However, some spokesmen feared that the change of feeling in Britain might prove shortlived, while the *Otago Daily Times*, conceding that on a small scale Weld had suddenly become a hero, noted sourly that he was nevertheless a hero on paper only.

109. *ODT*, 1 May 1865, p.4c-d; also 18 May 1865, p.5b.
111. *WI*, 18 May 1865, p.2d-e; *NZS*, 27 May 1865, p.2c-d; *LT*, 13 June 1865, p.4f; *Press*, 29 May 1865, p.2b-c; 14 July 1865, p.2b-d; 27 July 1865, p.2c-e.
112. e.g., *NE*, 23 May 1865, p.2e.
It was time Weld descended from the clouds and set about implementing his promised policy. 113

The fragmentary private correspondence surviving from this period further illustrates the varying regional attitudes towards Weld and his ministry. In Auckland, W. St Hill reported to Gore Browne, the impression prevailed that Grey still contrived to 'humbug' his ministers and had Weld 'completely under his thumb'. 114 But Gore Browne learned far more of political feeling and gossip current in the south from F.D. Bell, writing from Dunedin in May.

Weld has had a most difficult part to play - but on the whole he has managed admirably. I was afraid that he would quarrel with Grey (not being able to help it): but it is amusing to see how capably they get on together. Grey, having got rid of Fox & Co, and finding that Weld was a kind of man with whom deceit was useless, elected to quarrel with the General instead of with Weld. The result has been that the General storms at Governor & Ministers, while Grey backs up Weld and has allied himself with him in despatches.

Bell forwarded for Gore Browne's information a copy of the parliamentary paper issued by Weld in anticipation of the forthcoming session and setting out his policy with regard to the removal of the troops.

I dont agree with all his proposals, nor do I think that an army of bushrangers 1500 strong will hold the country against the fanatics of the new 'Pai Marire' superstition if the rebellion should break out hotly again in Waikato. But I cant help thinking that Waikato is done - accepts the issue - and will not again make fight: and if so the East Coast ruffians who murdered poor Volkner wont be able to do much harm beyond frightening us occasionally and postponing for a time the colonisation of that part of the country.

113. ODT, 27 May 1865, p.4c-d.
114. W. St Hill to Gore Browne, 10 May 1865, Gore Browne MSS., No.40, GBL/3.
Cameron's activities - or lack thereof - Bell viewed with some amazement.

I haven't the least idea what the General has done in the last 4 months. Every mail brings news of some small movement, but nothing decisive happens. I love Cameron, and am slow to think he is to blame - but still there is absolutely nothing for the campaign in the shape of peace or settlement of the main question and I suppose your Commander must ever be judged not by his operations but by their present result. It is surely a great marvel that 10,000 soldiers and ever so many militiamen cant get from Wanganui to Taranaki - but I cease to try & understand the riddle.

Meanwhile, Bell continued, there was hardly a doubt that Weld would have as good a majority in the forthcoming session as in the last.

Canterbury will go for him to a man - Wellington ditto - Taranaki ditto - most of Nelson ditto - By the way, Sewell is going to be returned to the Lower House for Taranaki! Fancy that! Please to remember 1860 & 1861, and then suppose the Peacemaking Sewell returned for Taranaki men. Mantell I believe will retire upstairs to the Lords. He has got on well with Grey, being a jolly savage and having sympathies with Grey about little peccadillos which end in babies, whereof old Mantell has a couple come & coming. The Middle Island will certainly support Weld through thick & thin. Auckland will make a desperate effort to upset with him the Seat of Govt change, but it wont succeed.

By the mail in June, Bell reported, Weld expected to get his answers from Cardwell concerning the self-reliant resolutions, and then the Assembly should meet.

I hear from London that Sir F Rogers & the other Colonial Office men will support Weld's views - indeed they are likely enough to jump at a minute recommending the immediate withdrawal of the troops. Not that I think the troops will go, unless we get to war with the United States or somebody (just to keep our hand in):
but it will be a fine chance for Ministers to tell Parliament that they are to go and we shall see a good account of the spirited conduct of the rapacious settlers. I think meanwhile that Grey is dreadfully tired of the job and wants to go home. Of course as one thing after another fails and peace dont come any nearer, while his term of office is slipping away, he feels that the end of his six years may come without glory. He supports the removal of the troops on the principle he always pursues of making sure that if a thing succeeds he is to have the praise and if it dont somebody else is to have the blame: but his support is of that lefthanded kind which keeps his loophole safe. If the removal of the troops goes well, it will be 'There; I told you so; I made peace, and sent away 10,000 men, relieving the Empire of which I am a High Officer etc etc' If it doesnt, it will be 'my advisers recommend it, and against all my warnings carried it out'.

If, as Weld had declared in November, policy after all mainly rested on questions of finance, another truism was that political support depended largely on success. And given the limited extent of its accomplishments during its eight months in office, the ministry stood to lose rather than to retain the votes of those representatives whose support had been lukewarm from the start.

The tenor of press and private comment during the inter-sessional period indicated the probable alignment in the House. As ministers themselves anticipated, finance would be the most contentious issue: on this members would tend to vote in provincial blocs - with Auckland and Otago opposed on principle to anything the Government might suggest. Their

115. ibid., F.D.Bell to Gore Browne, 12 May 1865, No.41.
116. e.g., J.C.Richmond to C.W.Richmond, 24 July 1865, R-A Papers, II, 170: 'We shall yet be crushed by finance unless there is great patriotism hidden away in Otago and Auckland.' Note also HBH, 25 May 1865, p.1d; WI, 13 July 1865, p.5c-d.
antagonism reinforced by the choice of Wellington as the port of call for the Panama mail service, these advocates of separation, united under a disgruntled Stafford's leadership, would attract to their ranks isolated dissentients who otherwise would have little prospect of rendering effective opposition. Defence and native policy, too, would prove difficult matters for discussion, as would the vexed question of parliamentary representation. On all of these issues, Weld's determination to consider the colony's interests as a whole would conflict with the representatives' tendency to put provincial considerations foremost.

It was Weld personally, not his ministry nor his policy, who had really commanded support. The general reaction to his appointment had been one of relief that a man of such impeccable reputation was now in charge of colonial affairs. Yet was this enough? None doubted Weld's personal honesty and absolute integrity, but had he political skill sufficient to carry through the policy to which he stood committed? Was that policy indeed practicable? The ideal of self-reliance had been sanctioned: that had cost the House nothing. But now the Imperial Government had accepted self-reliance as the colony's creed, and it was exceedingly doubtful whether members' personal allegiance to Weld could become a political force strong enough to persuade them to vote the means to implement that policy.

117. J.C.Richmond to H.A.Atkinson, 22 June 1865, R-A Papers, II, 165: 'Stafford has been behaving very badly to Weld and also to me privately.... It will not do to trust him at all when his own conceit... is engaged.' Also W.St Hill to Gore Browne, 4 July 1865, Gore Browne MSS., No.44, GB 1/3: 'Report says, that what with Auckland and Otago being of one way of thinking, & also a strong Nelson element combined, the Weld Ministry will be turned out.'

118. ODT, 8 July 1865, p.4c-d; LT, 14 July 1865, p.7c; Press, 27 July 1865, p.2c-e.
Grey's support too was still unpredictable. Relations between Governor and Government had certainly fluctuated in the past eight months, improving only as those between Grey and Cameron deteriorated. But Weld was far too ready to take Grey at his word. Richmond, St Hill and Bell were justified in their apprehension for, with Cameron's resignation, the discretionary authority surrounding the recall of the troops had reverted to Grey. He no longer needed to advocate self-reliance.
CHAPTER X

DEFEAT: 1865

The opening of the Assembly, delayed to await the Governor's pleasure, finally took place on 26 July. This time however, Grey was riding high in his ministers' estimation, for he returned to Wellington fresh from victory in the field. The Weraroa had fallen at last, thanks to the combined energies and initiative of Governor, Government, and the colonial forces.

The decision to mount such an attack was as much the ministry's as Grey's. While Grey and Cameron had been wrangling in Auckland, report had reached Weld and his colleagues, presumably through Mantell and/or Atkinson, that Grey was refusing to allow Cameron to send away the troops. Still upholding their original policy of withdrawing the troops, ministers took counsel. All deplored Grey's interference yet

1. NE, 1 August 1865, p.2e; LT, 1 August 1865, p.2c-d; ODT, 3 August 1865, p.4e-f for varied press comment on the Governor's speech.

2. Sewell Journal, III, entry beginning 26 July 1865, pp.197-204; WI, 3 August 1865, p.3e; 'Papers Relative to the Capture of the Weraroa Pa', AJHR, 1865, A7. Rutherford, pp.536-7 cf. Dalton, pp.232-4. J.D. Ormond to McLean, 31 July 1865, McLean MSS., F326, No.54 for Ormond's opinion that the feat was receiving an undue amount of attention. Note too Rogers minute, 17 October 1865, on Grey to Cardwell, 19 July 1865, No.92, CO 209/191: 'Everything appears to have been extremely well planned by Sir G. & extremely well executed by the Colonial forces. At the same time there was, I think, hardly enough fighting to support the language as to "gallantry" wh Sir G.G. uses. It is a very creditable affair - made the most of.'

they were 'hamstrung' by their being on good terms with Grey and by feeling that he was in fact fighting their battle against the General. Within two hours of Grey's arrival in Wellington, Weld saw him and expressed the Government's strong disapproval of his action in preventing the departure of the troops. Grey excused himself by the circumstance of the non-capture of the Weraroa pa. Weld stated that if the troops were retained he should resign: 'But in order to get him [Grey] out of the dilemma in which he had placed himself, Weld advised him to go up to Wanganui, and arrange there for the capture of the Pa by colonial forces and natives; so that the ground for detaining the troops which he had alleged to General Cameron might be removed, and with a good grace he might be able to recall his protest. Practically this was acted upon. The Pa was taken - all occasion for detaining the Troops was gone - and we advised their removal accordingly. But as ministers were rapidly to realise, Grey was not at all convinced that the imperial forces should go.

The opening days of the session were relatively uneventful. There was 'a little hard hitting' between Stafford and Sewell, the latter taking the lead in Weld's absence through illness, but the impression prevailed that the ministry should stand. The two

4. ibid., 25 November 1865, pp.276-7; also 16 July 1865, pp.193-5; 23 July 1865, p.196.
5. Ormond to McLean, 31 July 1865. Wi, 8 August 1865, p.4e was critical of the 'factious opposition and almost feminine petulance' displayed by Stafford.
6. J.C. Richmond to McLean, 31 July 1865, McLean MSS., F.355, No.1 refers to Weld being 'a good deal out of sorts'.
questions on which ministers were in danger, predicted J.D. Ormond, were the sending away of all the troops, and finance and taxes; 'the general view on these questions will develop itself within a few days'. Debate on the Address-in-Reply occasioned 'a few weak attacks' from Stafford well countered by Weld who took his erstwhile colleague to task for a 'Bashi-Bazouk speech'. Stafford subsided, temporarily, into 'a nagging opposition'. But there would yet be a debate on the removal of the troops, Ormond insisted.

The address might have produced it but by general consent it was waived on that occasion. No explanation has been made by Ministers of how they expect to make provision in place of the Troops - Considerable discontent is felt at their not doing so. If we have no information from them during the next few days pressure will be brought to bear to extract it .... I shd say Weld's govt is strong & will last unless something unforeseen springs up to alter present opinions. The principal source of weakness of Weld's govt is want of tact - Old Sewell & Richardson are enough to ruin any ministry - instead of being conciliatory they seem to step out of way to offend people who cd be kept with them.

7. Ormond to McLean, 31 July 1865. NE, 5 August 1865, p.2e-f; 12 August 1865, p.7c; LT, 14 August 1865, p.7a similarly anticipated trouble on these issues.

8. Ormond to McLean, 3 August 1865, McLean MSS., F.326, No.56.

9. PD, 1864-6, p.223.


11. Ormond to McLean, 3 August 1865. T.King to H.A. Atkinson, 5 August 1865, H.A. Atkinson MSS.: 'I hope and trust your Ministry will hold its own. I cannot imagine any combination in the present house successfully opposing you.'
Mathew Richmond, evincing considerable sympathy for Auckland grievances, similarly anticipated that Weld's ministry would remain undisturbed for the session. The only measure which in his opinion would try the Government was a proposed new representation bill 'and that is a question which calls forth so much selfish feeling that a formidable opposition may be got up upon it'.

On 12 August James Edward FitzGerald was sworn in as Native Minister. The news swept through capital and colony, arousing widespread consternation both within and without the House. 'To my mind nothing so dangerous to the interests of the Northern Island could possibly have happened', wrote Ormond aghast. 'Judging fr what I hear outside, the feeling is very strong against it, even fr Middle Island members. If anything can destroy Weld's govt this will. It becomes however a question of if they are turned out who will go in to succeed them.'

Within the cabinet the accession of the country's most colourful and vociferous humanitarian was welcomed, but with reservations. 'We have I am sure done right in getting him

---

12. M.Richmond to Gore Browne, 10 August 1865, Gore Browne MSS., No.48, GB 1/3.

13. WI, 15 August 1865, p.4f; LT, 15 August 1865, p.2d; 17 August 1865, p.2c-d; ODT, 18 August 1865, p.5d; TH, 19 August 1865,p.3d; HBH, 19 August 1865, p.3b; NE, 22 August 1865, p.2e; 26 August 1865, p.2e-f, p.3a.

to join us", Sewell wrote in unusually expansive fashion. 

"He is a great strength and help to us in many ways, but especially at this moment he has a prestige with the Natives which it is our duty if possible to turn to good account. Ministerial prospects are not easy or settled by any means."¹⁵

Harry Atkinson thought the appointment would give a good deal of additional steam power to the ministry.¹⁶ J.C. Richmond was cautious. To Gore Browne in Tasmania he commented: "You will be astonished that FitzGerald had joined us. I hope and think his great abilities turned to practice will be less wild and infinitely more useful than they have been when employed in working out theories on assumed facts. We want his energies for the degeneration of the rebellion into Hau hau is a wretched symptom. You will rejoice to see that this brings its good with it by compelling all the reasonable men of the Maori race to side with us."¹⁷

But to his brother, James Richmond, was a little more forthright.

How continually I wish you were near to help in our confusions. FitzGerald has just joined the ministry. I feel that in agreeing I eat a little dirt. Great as his abilities are his rash judgement has been yet more prominent for the last four years and have done us no little harm. His personal energy will be of immense


¹⁶. A.S. Atkinson to Emily Richmond, 14 August 1865, R-A Papers, II, 174: "Harry thinks he /FitzGerald/ will give a good deal of additional steam power to the ministry and I dare say he will, but he is such a visionary, if not a quack, that one does not like it altogether."

¹⁷. J.C. Richmond to Gore Browne, 14 August 1865, Gore Browne MSS., No.49, GB 1/3.
value and his fertility of resource .... It is in my mind a sacrifice nevertheless to have joined him ...

The pressure for the appointment had clearly come from Weld. Not taking his initial refusal as final, the Premier had continually tried to persuade FitzGerald to change his mind, the requests probably increasing as Weld became more disillusioned with Mantell's performance. FitzGerald resisted for months. As he explained in response to a query from Henry S elfe:

You say you expected to hear that I had taken office. I have been asked to join every Ministry which has been formed since N Zealand was a colony. If I would have joined any it would have been Weld's. But I never will unless I am forced until I can afford it, unless I am head of it or have the leading role. The fact is I am far more influential out of a Ministry than in it. I am living here in Christchurch daily seeing my work of the last three years coming home. The natives are beginning to look to me and I have been deeply gratified by what the Bishop of Waipori and others from the north have told me that the natives now all look to Whiterata .... The tone of the Colony is changed. The troops

18. J.C. Richmond to C.W. Richmond, 14 August 1865, R- A Papers, II, 175. Also J.C. Richmond to Mary Richmond, 18 August 1865, ibid., 176: 'There is a very natural and healthy mistrust of FitzGerald. His talk and writing has had an excessive unreality about it and I think clever, well informed and brilliant debater as he is that he very often loses the plain thread of reason in his views. I have, however, more than hope that his confusion of idea will not follow him into practice.'

19. Note the outburst from Weld which Mantell himself provoked, PD, 1864-6, p.275: 'It was unfortunate that the honourable member Mantell should have risen and blamed the Government for not having a more definite policy to lay before the House, when he had retained his seat in the Ministry up to within three days of the meeting of the Assembly, and up to that moment had never proposed any Native policy whatever.'
are to go. There is to be peace. And I hope in the coming session of the Assembly to make some great steps in Maori policy. 20

Richmond's accession was an added deterrent as far as FitzGerald was concerned. 'I shall now never join this Govt' he declared in July. 'Weld has taken in Richmond whom I dont like. Besides, he continued 'I can do more good out of Govt than in it.'

I am not satisfied with matters. There is just enough war going on to keep the whole of the natives in excitement without doing any good. Still Weld has done better than any one else. The change of the Govt to Wellington is a great feat in the face of Grey's opposition. He has headed off Cameron who is perfectly useless as a commander, and he has tamed Grey and brought him completely under his control. Weld has a great deal of the stuff of which great Ministers are made. And I shall support his Govt cordially. I am...illegible...to see all my policy gradually adopted. I believe that this Session we shall get the Natives into the House. They are now always writing to me...And I shall probably go up to see all the chiefs as soon as the Assembly is over. But this Pai Marire movement is really a most difficult and dangerous one to deal with. However Weld is just the man for that part of the affair. Mantell has disappointed me. I thought he would have made a good native minister. 21

Mantell's resignation, Weld's ill health, and the realisation that he would be in a position possibly to implement his cherished ideals 22 together must have persuaded FitzGerald to accept Weld's offer. Or, as C.C. Bowen commented on hearing that FitzGerald had taken office: 'Last week he swore by all his Gods he would not. But his Gods were Maori Gods.

20. FitzGerald to Selfe, 15 May 1865, Selfe MSS., II, No. 140.
21. ibid., FitzGerald to Selfe, 14 July 1865. Also FitzGerald to Mantell, 11 July 1865, in which FitzGerald admits to being 'very heartsick' at the state of native affairs.
22. FitzGerald to McLean, 28 June 1869, McLean MSS., F. 215, No. 15 gives a clear picture of FitzGerald's attitude and objectives throughout the sixties.
& perhaps he has turned Pai-Marire.\textsuperscript{23}

FitzGerald in office proved to be far more moderate than most contemporaries expected.\textsuperscript{24} The Native Lands Bill, Native Rights Bill and Outlying Police Districts Bill containing the essence of his policy\textsuperscript{25} met, initially at least, with a fairly favourable reaction. FitzGerald was a different man as minister, Ormond informed McLean, an opinion reinforced by Arthur Atkinson who noted on 22 August: 'Went to the House at 12 - not much doing except a little more native policy from FitzGerald who as perhaps might have been expected is not so wild as Minister as he was as editor.'\textsuperscript{26}

The session proceeded 'somewhat languidly'.\textsuperscript{27} There was a good deal of latent opposition, Sewell observed, but nobody dared bring it to a head. 'No one is in truth prepared to take our places.'\textsuperscript{28} Richmond could see no possibility of a party being organised on any intelligible principle: 'Otago and Auckland men feel that an alliance between them has no permanent

\begin{itemize}
\item[23.]
Bowen to Selfe, 14 August 1865, Selfe MSS., II, No.157.
\item[24.]
e.g., Emily Richmond to H.A. Atkinson, 10 September 1865, H.A. Atkinson MSS.
\item[25.]
\item[26.]
\item[27.]
J.C. Richmond to Mary Richmond, 23 August 1865, R-A Papers, II, 177.
\item[28.]
Sewell Journal, III, entry beginning 20 August 1865, p.213.
\end{itemize}
basis and would not do to found a government.

These halcyon days were a welcome respite for there was a good deal of sickness amongst the cabinet. Weld, 'almost used up', attended the House spasmodically; Atkinson, 'never...very well since his great loss', was finding the pressures of office a heavy strain and was suffering 'headache and something like vertigo' in common with FitzGerald and Richmond. But none expected the calm to last, though battle begun on Robert Graham's motion to make Auckland and Otago the ports of arrival and departure for the Panama mail steamers was 'adjourned after a few shots were fired'. Conscious that ministers had as yet 'only dipped our feet into the troubled waters', Sewell saw the real conflict looming ahead over finance, primarily in relation to the withdrawal of the troops. 'Are the Troops really to be withdrawn? Or have we been only making a sham pretence in order to excuse our refusing to pay the Imperial bill of costs? If we do mean to withdraw them what are we going to do? And what will it cost? And who is to pay?' With so many points

29. J.C.Richmond to Mary Richmond, 23 August 1865.
30. J.C.Richmond to Gore Browne, 14 August 1865.
31. J.C.Richmond to Mary Richmond, 23 August 1865.
32. A.S.Atkinson Journal, 25 August 1865. See also LT, 30 August 1865, p.2b-c; Press, 1 September 1865, p.2c-e, commenting on the developing alliance between Auckland and Otago members - as evidenced in the 'monstrous proposal' to alter the terms of the Panama contract.
involved over which there would be so much diversity of opinion, the Attorney-General was not at all sanguine that the Government would obtain majority support in the House. And on this fundamental point of the troops' withdrawal, Sewell, for one, felt the ministry was greatly weakened in its stand by Grey's double-dealing. The Governor's known predilection for the Imperial regiments gave great strength and courage to opposition forces; Stafford was just waiting his opportunity; Featherston would probably join him; and quite a respectable government could be formed on the principle of retaining the troops. 34

Richmond was equally apprehensive.

The air of politics has been a little lowering and there is a large number of discontented members hanging about the cave of Adullam but I do not think there is a David to take the lead. Featherston is not happy. He has never liked the idea of the troops going ... Stafford too is uneasy but I think it is that he feels he has separated from his friends and the only party that have principles and a policy reaching at all ahead. I do not think they cod. work together ... All hope for the Colony is gone if we continue this habit of sessional changes of ministry. Still the air is not clear and bright and I do not feel as confident as I did a fortnight ago. 35

In the divisions during the first month Auckland, Otago and Nelson representatives had been the most consistent.

34. ibid., 27 August 1865, pp.213-4.
35. J.C. Richmond to Mary Richmond, 28 August 1865, R-A Papers, II, 179 cf. T.King to Harry Atkinson, 19 August 1865, H.A. Atkinson MSS.: 'Stafford is a great fool to damage his reputation by an alliance with men like Macandrew. However I dont think he can do much harm.' Note also TH, 9 September 1865, p.2d.
opponents of government measures, and resumption of debate on the Panama service ports of call revealed that the opposition bloc was beginning to coalesce. The process was facilitated by FitzGerald's tactless comments on Auckland's war-based prosperity, which 'riled the Aucklanders a good deal', and by the Government's refusal to be pressurised by Otago representatives over the status of a native reserve in the Dunedin municipality. But, as Sewell had predicted, the real test of loyalties would be the Government's financial proposals.

Fitzherbert presented his financial statement to the House on 30 August. It was 'an able, lucid exposition' which took nearly three and a half hours to deliver; 'good on the whole

---

36. My grateful thanks are here due to my father for turning his misfortune to my advantage when he combined the roles of hospital patient and research assistant and saved me the time-consuming process of analysing the 1864-5 division lists.

37. PD, 1864-6, pp.371-80; ODT, 9 September 1865, p.4c-d for an indication of strong Otago feelings on this matter.

38. PD, 1864-6, p.380.

39. A.S.Atkinson Journal, 29 August 1865. LT, 6 September 1865, p.2b was critical of FitzGerald's needless aggravation of the situation.

40. PD, 1864-6, pp.382-3. And see below p.278 for Weld's reference to the significance of this issue in relation to the support of the Otago representatives. See also 'Report of the Select Committee on the Otago Reserves; together with the Minutes of the Proceedings of the Committee', AJHR, 1865, F2.

41. PD, 1864-6, pp.383-92.

42. J.D.Ormond to McLean, 3 September 1865, McLean MSS., F.326, No.62.
& not tedious' commented Atkinson. 'Half an hour from Colenso is far worse.' 43 'You will be amused when you read the speech', Ormond informed McLean. 'Old Fitz the extreme of the Prov. party is metamorphosed into a thorough Centralist - as the old beggar proceeded in his Speech those who had known him in his former character rubbed their eyes doubting if it were the identical Fitzherbert who was then addressing them.' Ormond then proceeded to speculate on the probable effects of this financial policy.

I have scarcely met any one who is satisfied - The two main points of objection are the proposals with regard to dealing with the general ordinary revenue & the provision for the internal Defence of the Colony. The first of course is the point.Middle Island men & all the Provincial party take up most strongly & very wroth they are at the overthrow of Provincial interests ... Briefly ... the proposal wd reduce this years Prov. share of the Customs revenue of 3/8 to 2/8 this is as near as possible. But the objectionable feature is that this is not to be permanent Each year for the future the House is to vote such share as it may think fit to the Provinces. It is needless to point out how difficult it will be for the Provinces to carry out their functions with such a state of uncertainty as to the means at their disposal to work on. This applies particularly to the Northern Island where the Territorial Revenue is nearly exhausted & where under the Native Lands Act there is no opportunity of recruiting it.

Personally, Ormond maintained, he did not have very strong feelings on the subject and would not object were the provinces to be abandoned tomorrow, 'but I confess I do not like this way of doing it'.

Take for instance Auckland. The revenue of Auckland is of course Customs Revenue almost entirely, & yet for the future under Govt proposals Auckland will have nothing certain at all. On the contrary we were told

that if the Colony needed it, the whole of it wd be
taken, but if things get better that perhaps less wd
be wanted. In a word it destroys altogether the credit
of the Provinces - they for the future wd have nothing
certain except their territorial revenue - all Auckland
all Otago & Wellington are up in arms at this proposal.
Featherston calls it the most monstrous injustice that
ever was proposed. I should say at any rate a large
majority of the House were opposed to the adoption
of that part of the policy.

The aspect most strongly condemned by Ormond as a
'Northern Island man' was the 'utter insufficiency' of the
proposals for internal defence.

Of course it is proposed to send the troops away
though I dont believe they are going or at least a
very few of them. But at any rate Ministers say they
are - They propose then that two sums £20,000 &
£60,000 shall cover the expenditure of the Colony for
purposes of Defence up to June 30th 1866. The first
sum £20,000 is to be for the expenses on Militia &
Volunteers. This amount will do little if any more
than provide for the current expenditure during the
training time & keeping up the necessary Militia staff
& that for all practical purposes of Defence it may
be left out of the calculation. The other sum of £60,000
is to pay for everything Colonial troops - Native
Allies, transport & everything else connected with the
Defence of the Country. In a word it will provide
800 men for six months calculating the cost of each
man at what I believe on good authority is about the
average viz £150.

What use 800 men would be to preserve the peace of the
country Ormond could not imagine. In his opinion no more
reckless proposal could have been made. It meant nothing
less than the abandonment of everything gained by the war.

I would have supported Weld in almost anything rather
than have risked the calamity of leaving the country
at a time like this without a policy defined & in action.
But I cannot go the length of voting confidence in a
policy I look on as fraught with such certain ruin as
this wd be. I have voted for Govt in every division up to this time but I shall be obliged to go against them now, unless they will do that which I fear is out of the question - I mean come to some compromise. It is proposed that they shall be asked to meet their would be supporters, with a view to seeing if it be not possible to arrange matters - I do not myself hope much for this meeting. It is impossible they can re-consider & entirely reform their Finance policy & nothing less than that would satisfy the House.

Moreover, Ormond concluded, what would the British authorities think of the colony when they heard that ministers proposed a paltry vote of £60,000 per annum to keep the peace?

They can think but one thing & that is that in the proposal to send away the Troops we are endeavouring to humbug them. Certainly I shd think the Governor will tell the Home Govt & fairly too, that he does not feel justified in sending away the troops with such a provision as this only provided to preserve the colony. At the same time that we name £60,000 for internal defence we put down sums like £45,000 for Telegraphs, £42,000 for Postal etc etc. The fact is the Govt depends entirely on Middle Island votes & the policy is entirely a Middle Island policy. Really I for the first time begin to look to separation of the Islands as something that will come. I dont say I adopt the opinion but for the first time, I do entertain it. Since I wrote the above I have been at dinner at Bellamy's I hear nothing but dissolution dissolution on all sides - many already seem to realize it as a reality. I do not - there are many & great ups & downs & very sudden ups & downs too in politics. The political horizon may clear itself again & suddenly but it certainly is very overcast at present. Nor can I see how it can be reasonably expected to be cleared up - we
shall see.

Ormond's appraisal of the situation was extremely accurate. As revealed by the initial debate on ways and means Auckland, Otago and Wellington representatives were incensed at the Government's intention of tampering with the 1856 Compact, with Aucklanders 'still further sore at Fitzherbert for saying that "the Province of Auckland hung like a millstone round the neck of the Colony financially"'. Separation and dissolution became the opposition catch cries, but an all out attack on the Government was postponed until 6 September, on which date Vogel was due to move resolutions condemning the ministry's proposals to alter provincial allocations and to increase taxation. In the interim, Arthur Atkinson reported, opponents were hard at work 'scheming & catching votes'.

'The last notion is to divide this island into two provinces or colonies - Wellington & Hawkes Bay - & Auckland & Taranaki - a pleasant notion being made an outlying district of Auckland - & to have the honour of sending up a member or

44. Ormond to McLean, 3 September 1865. Note also M. Richmond to Gore Browne, 11 September 1865, Gore Browne MSS., No. 54: 'My last letter to you was written after the reply to the address had been carried triumphantly and everything then tended to show that they would be in no danger of being removed this session but they have been somewhat imprudent they have threatened to meddle with the Provinces share of the Customs which of course brought a host of Provincials against them.' For press reaction, _WI_, 2 September 1865, p.5a-c; 7 September 1865, pp.4f, 5a; _Press_, 7 September 1865, p.2b-c; 8 September 1865, p.2d-f; also 23 September 1865, p.2b-c; _ODT_, 8 September 1865, p.4c-e; _HBH_, 9 September 1865, p.2e-f; 12 September 1865, pp.2f, 3a; _LT_, 12 September 1865, p.2c; _TH_, 16 September 1865, p.2e;

45. A.S. Atkinson Journal, 31 August 1865; _PD_, 1864-6, pp.397-412; ibid., p.388 for Fitzherbert's comment in context.

46. e.g., _ODT_, 9 September 1865, p.4c-d.
two to the Auckland council. They are in great hopes as they expect to get Featherston with them & others of the Wellington men. 47

Fully cognizant of these manoeuvring ministers were still fairly confident of holding their position. 'Our great sessional fight is not yet over', Richmond admitted; 'the Provinceals ... are laying their heads together to make the river run up hill and to spend half a crown out of sixpence a day. I do not think we can be beaten but they will lay their heads together for some time before they give up the attempt.' Again the health of various ministers was cause for concern. Richmond noted that there had been 'a good deal of small sickness' amongst the Government, FitzGerald, Fitzherbert, Weld and Sewell all affected, Richardson the only 'sound' man. Atkinson, however, was reputed to be 'much better' and Richmond himself 'quite recovered'. 48

By the time the Vogel and Thomas Russell resolutions (finance and separation respectively) came up for discussion, the ministry was able to put on a considerable show of strength. Criticism from Vogel, seconded by Macandrew, was well countered by Fitzherbert, Weld and FitzGerald. But though the Government won a comfortable majority on the final division, this resulted from an exodus of opposition members hoping to avoid a vote on the main question; an earlier 27:25 verdict was a real indication of the opposition bloc's growing strength. 49

47. A.S Atkinson Journal, 2 September 1865.
48. J.C Richmond to Mary Richmond, 4 September 1865, R-A Papers, II, 182-3.
Russell's motion the following day took up far more time in the House. The former defence minister took the opportunity to make a strong attack on most aspects of government policy - native, financial, and military in particular. Weld answered 'warmly but very well'. Atkinson took up a number of Russell's statements about the Waikato settlers and defence generally, with Fitzherbert repudiating allegations of financial mismanagement when debate resumed.

Ensconced in the Speaker's chair, David Monro reflected on recent events:

_The plot if anything thickens in this unhappy Colony. It is not enough for us apparently that we would have the Maories to contend with. But we can't agree among ourselves. One year it is the Governor supported by Mr Cardwell on the one hand and the Responsible Ministers of the Colony on the other who exhaust all their energies in covering one another with mud. Next year it is the Governor and the General the two parties who of all others shd cooperate in order to make success possible who go at one another like a couple of bulldogs or Kilkenny cats. I wonder what the Maories think of all this and have not the least doubt that they write us down as a parcel of confounded fools & imbeciles. The priests of the Hau-haus say they have bewitched us. One of them at Wanganui boasted that by his incantations he had taken all the pluck out of the General, and made him walk up and down the beach like a lame sea-gull. But I really think that they have good grounds for a still greater belief in the efficacy of their spells and when they see us squabbling among ourselves as we have done more or less ever since their attitude towards us has been a hostile one. They may well believe that we are all bewitched._

---

51. Ibid., 8, 9 September 1865; PD, 1864-6, pp. 438-54, 460-72, 473-90.
Turning to his immediate surroundings, Monro continued:

While I am writing to you there is a debate going on which is now in the fourth day of its continuance & is likely to last Heaven knows how much longer yet. As Speaker I have some consolation in reckoning up that there are only 54 Members in the House and that 36 of them have already spoken, so that I cannot have more than 18 additional speeches to listen to. But when I commence to hug this idea to my breast and derive some comfort from it I am obliged to admit to myself that the great probability is that I shall have it all over again on the amendt and that the question may not be settled for some 6 days yet.

But I have not yet told you what the question is. The mover is Mr Thos Russell one of the Fox Whitaker Ministry and the issue he raises is whether it is not desirable to divide the Colony into two. But this it appears is a very large question, and Members take the opportunity (which it is impossible to deny to them) of speaking on every possible question that affects either the Northern or the Middle Island. The debate has consisted chiefly of mutual recriminations; the Northern Members accusing the South of neglecting its interests and leaving it unprotected; the South on the other hand twitting the North with a want of pluck and self-reliance, and a very earnest longing for Govt and Commissariat expenditure. Between the two sections of the Colony, there is an exceedingly bad feeling. The North cannot get over the removal of the Seat of Govt: the Middle Island is perfectly savage at the drain upon its revenues which has been occasioned and is still going on on account of these Maori disturbances. It is pretty well known I am told, what the division will be. Ministers are expected to have a majority of 15: and as they have accepted this question as a test of party strength they may consider this pretty satisfactory.

But as Monro indicated, there were other questions on which the Government was not likely to command the same support.

Finance is the reef on which the New Zealand ship is likely to be wrecked. The difficulty of accomplishing that circular operation of making the two
ends meet increases year by year: and it has now become necessary to lay 'main basse' upon a portion of the ordinary revenue which up to the present time has gone to the Provinces - all those persons in the House connected with the Provincial govs and interested in large Provincial expenditure raise a howl of dissatisfaction. I am not at all clear that Ministers are sure of surviving the Session. They will have a narrow squeak of it on several occasions and will have to modify their financial schemes considerably. On every other subject I think they could command a considerable majority.

Adverting to recent controversies Monro commented:

You have heard I daresay that FitzGerald is now Native Minister. He is a perfect madman as regards the Maoris: but notwithstanding I think it is the best appointment that could have been made. For some time past he has been in communication with Mr Thomson & other rebellious Maories and has succeeded in gaining their confidence and creating the impression on their minds that he is a champion and advocate of theirs. This of course has been a most irregular proceeding and one which in a well governed country would never have been allowed for an instant. But nevertheless there it is. FitzGerald has acquired for himself that position and reputation and it is just possible that his appointment may conciliate a considerable portion of the Maori population. Besides FitzGerald with all his crochets is a fine manly fellow and I have very little doubt that a more intimate acquaintance with his pets will soon ... dissipate many of the delusions which he cherishes at the present time.

The Grey-Cameron quarrel was also a subject for the Speaker's pen.

You will have seen the correspondence between the Governor and the General & also have heard of Grey's success in taking the Wereroa /sic/ Pah. I am exceedingly sorry that the General should have taken the line he did I thought better of him before I saw the correspondence. In fact I was inclined to some small extent to make him the object of a mild hero worship.
But I can't say that he comes well out of the correspondence. Many of his letters are exceedingly offensive and the whole tone of them is much deficient in that courtesy which one expects to find in a 'soldier and a gentleman'. I am told that he is a most un governable old fellow. Sewell tells me that he had it from Sir George himself that he had put up with more from Cameron than he wd have put up with from any other man. I understand that he has even gone the length in his tantrums of shaking his fist in Grey's face and calling him a liar. This I repeat of course in confidence. I fancy however that the General will have the best of it at home. He will be there to tell his own story which is something. But what still more is this: that in that part of the correspondence relating to the sending home of the 5 regiments the General I fancy will be held to have decidedly the best of it. He appears to have wanted to do it and writes in an honest straightforward manner. Sir Geo Grey with his habitual diplomacy after first telling the General to act on his own responsibility then when the General proposes to do so interposes his authority as Governor and arrests the General's action - The squabble I am afraid will do no good.

As regards Imperial troops the ministerial policy is one of self-reliance. Their proposition is to send all the soldiers home and rely upon such Colonial forces as we can raise and pay. It is a desperate policy: but really I believe that if we had adopted it two years ago and if instead of all the waste which has attended on the discord between the directing agents and the inaction of the troops, we had applied the money which has been spent to the maintenance of a force partly European and partly Native whose operations wd have been under our control, we shd by this time have accomplished much more than has yet been done. Our colonial forces at Wereroa and Pipiriki have behaved remarkably well, inflicting heavy loss upon the Maoris and fighting against odds: and the friendly Maoris in the East Cape District are behaving equally well.

It was just possible, Monro ruminated, that New Zealand might yet pull through. If everything went fortunately; if relations with the Maoris improved; if the Home Government
would guarantee the two million pounds of the loan not yet raised; then the colonists might succeed.

But it is just as likely that we shall fail. We may meet with reverses and in another year we may exhaust our resources. What then? If we have not the means to pay constabulary force of any sort our out settlers will have to fall back upon the settled centres. There will be great destruction of property; possibly some dreadful massacres; and then perhaps the mother country will be roused to a sense of her responsibilities towards her children in this distant dependency. At the present time all she seems to care for us is the money question. Every step taken and every policy are brought to the test of 'what will it cost' and John Bull condemns and growls whenever his breeches pocket is threatened; but smiles and applauds if you can only convince him that he is not to be called upon to pay. The H. of Commons went off quite lately into an ecstasy of cheers when Mr Cardwell announced to them the other evening that he had received £500,000 from the Colony. I am extremely glad that this money was paid. I should not like to owe a single farthing to such a curmudgeon. It might be charitable perhaps to suppose that the cheers indicated appreciation of the honesty of a Colony which struggling with fearful difficulties had yet so much sense of honour that it paid its just debts. That is at all events how some years ago when I had faith in the generosity of John Bull I should have interpreted the event. But I cant look at it in that light now: and when I read the debates in Parliament the articles in the Times & Saturday Review and even some of the despatches of the Secretary of State, I feel that my illusion of the generosity of England vanishes, and I become almost a Frenchman or a Yankee.

Half past one Wednesday morn

The debate has just terminated. There have been 41 speeches and 27½ hours of solid talking. Mr Thos Russell replied making really a very good speech, and defending himself and late colleagues from the charges that had been brought against them of 'lavish expenditure' & incompetency. The House divided - for separation 17 - against it 31. There were to have been several amendts: but the adjournment of the
House was moved & carried and the question was dropped, both sides in a state of breathless exhaustion. We are promised however very shortly the threat of having it all over again, that is, the financial part of it, upon a motion of Mr Sewell's for a commission to enquire & report upon the expenditure of the 3 million loan money by the late Govt. 52 

The final division reflected a genuine majority for the Government, 53 but in one sense the result was unsatisfactory. For the House merely negatived Russell's separation motion: Weld's amendment distinctly affirming unity was not put to the vote. Though the credit of the whole colony depended in part upon the stability of the union, the House had not rejected separation in any form, merely 'the particular proposition at the particular time'. 54 As Arthur Atkinson saw it, the truth was that the House wished to say nothing '& so got off with saying as little as it could. We shall have Separation in full cry next session unless the Govt is very successful in its policy especially as regards the natives during the recess.' 55

With the 'interminable' 56 debate at last at an end, attention was soon focussed on other aspects of government policy. The amnesty proclamation of 2 September was strongly criticised for the pardon given to 'murderers' specifically exempted from amnesty in previous proclamations. 57 Few opposition

52. Monro to Gore Browne, 12 September 1865, Gore Browne MSS., No.55, GB 1/3; note also Ormond to McLean, 8 September 1865, McLean MSS., F.326, No.63.
53. PD, 1864-6, pp.493-525 for the final day's debate.
54. J.C.Richmond to Mary Richmond, 11 September 1865, R-A Papers, II, 184.
55. A.S.Atkinson Journal, 12 September 1865. For examples of press comment, NE, 16 September 1865, p.21; ODT, 30 September 1865, p.4b-d; TH, 30 September 1865, p.3b.
57. PD, 1864-6, pp.530-7.
members found FitzGerald's defence of government action satisfactory. Harry Atkinson's Volunteer Bill aroused less heated discussion, but resumption of an adjourned debate on the second reading of Weld's Representation Bill was the signal for another strong opposition attack, the increased number of members proposed for Canterbury being a major point of contention. Irritated by what he clearly regarded as puerile objections, Weld advised honourable members, Stafford in particular, not to be too certain about the line of conduct which would be adopted in the event of a defeat. If upset the present ministry might not be at all disposed to accept office again.

The most fundamental issue on which the ministry would stand or fall, financial policy, finally came up for debate on 19 September. That evening there was a 'universal scrimmage' on the motion for going into committee of supply 'as may be judged from the fact that the House went into committee three times & had not finished till past 1 a.m. Stafford made a fool of himself again - some other members of the opposition were fools already.'

The following day there was 'another general scrimmage', firstly over Vogel's motion for considering the tariff before taxation. 'On this Stafford again rather "nagged" at the Govt - whereupon Weld took him in hand & gave him a very proper rebuke & told him not to rely or draw too heavily on his past

58. ibid., pp.538-41.
59. ibid., pp.541-2, 545-9.
60. ibid., p.547.
reputation. 62 Vogel's motion having been disposed of (27:24), Stafford then moved as an amendment on going into supply that the country 'could not bear the proposed burden'. 63 Intending a vote of no confidence, Stafford this time proceeded 'in a respectable way as he is of that nature which ... /like/ the mythical spaniel improves by beating'. 64 Once again the division (26:20) favoured the Government. 65 After this 'the Auckland men, most of them, and the opposition generally made speeches washing their hands of the Estimates and very dirty water it was considering that Macandrew was one of the leaders of the party'. 66 Atkinson was reminded of Pontius Pilate 'who washed his hands & then went & did what he ought not to have done'. 67

But one difficulty was merely replaced by another. Having secured the House's agreement to the financial proposals in principle, the Government's problem now was to keep a quorum of members together sufficient to pass the necessary measures. 68 It seemed a thankless task and weary ministers were beginning to despair that the situation would ever improve. 'The Assembly is more anarchical and distracted than ever', Richmond complained. 'Everybody has some return to demand to gratify his own whim and on every important question two or three little sections try their several amendments'. 69

63. PD, 1864-6, pp.560-1.
65. PD, 1864-6, p.569.
66. J.C. Richmond to Mary Richmond, 22 September 1865, R-A Papers, II, 186.
Then on 27 September Colenso's motion censuring the Government for including so many Maori 'murderers' in its amnesty was 'carried by a fluke', the ayes having it on the voices and running out so that there could be no division.\textsuperscript{70} Angered by this adverse vote on a cardinal point of native policy, Weld refused to proceed with further government business until it was rescinded. Otherwise resignation. Next morning the House did reverse its decision\textsuperscript{71} - with a marked eagerness, according to Richmond. 'A change of Government must have thrown the balance in favor of the Auckland or of the Otago party and neither of these noble divisions of the political world trusts the other.'\textsuperscript{72}

But trust was unnecessary for the strengthening of this political alliance: mutual opposition to government proposals was a far stronger cohesive force, and practically every measure put forward by ministers in the following days offended provincial sensibilities in some way. Fitzgerald's New Maori Provinces Act was attacked by Aucklanders as 'perfectly wild and Utopian';\textsuperscript{73} his Native Lands Bill, recommitted for further discussion, provoked carping criticism, the exclusion of the Manawatu Block from the operation of the Bill being regarded as a ministerial sop to Wellington interests.\textsuperscript{74} Conversely Macandrew's New Provinces Bill was opposed by ministers who argued that it was unlikely to benefit outlying districts, but the division on the second reading was a 27:15 verdict.

\textsuperscript{70} A.S.Atkinson Journal, 27 September 1865; PD, 1864-6, pp.608-13; AJHR, 1866, Al, No.3, p.4 enclosure No.3 in Grey to Cardwell, 14 December 1865, No.125.

\textsuperscript{71} PD, 1864-6, pp.614-16.

\textsuperscript{72} J.C.Richmond to Mary Richmond, 29 September 1865, R-A Papers, II, 187.

\textsuperscript{73} PD, 1864-6, pp.621-5.

\textsuperscript{74} ibid., pp.628-30.
against the Government standpoint. Ministers also came in for criticism for supporting some private members' proposals, a Masters and Servants Bill promoted by the elderly Anglo-Indian, Cracroft Wilson, being by far the most unpopular.

An Otago Waste Lands Bill was challenged by Macandrew who maintained that it reflected the opinion of the provincial council and not the will of the local populace, while Richardson's motion for a select committee to report on postal arrangements for the colony was opposed by Auckland and Otago representatives on the grounds that a loaded committee might recommend the discontinuance of the Auckland/Sydney and Otago/Melbourne services. The New Zealand Settlements Amendment and Continuance Bill passed its third reading despite Auckland objections that the mode in which lands should be handed over to the province had not yet been decided. A measure to enable insolvent provinces, notably Southland, to hand over their securities to the general government and float loans through the latter's credit was challenged as inadequate. The Loan Allocation Bill charging the provinces interest on the amount of loan money expended in each region provoked strong Auckland reaction, members arguing that until the confiscated

75. ibid., pp.633-5.
76. ibid., pp.630-2.
77. ibid., pp.653-4.
78. ibid., p.662.
79. ibid., pp.662-3.
land had been sold and all the loan money expended, the Government was in no position to make a final settlement.

Clearly each of these measures did not arouse the same degree of opposition. But the consistency with which Auckland and Otago representatives voted against the Government showed that what had begun as an alliance of convenience had now become a political bloc strong enough to pose a very real threat to the ministry's existence. The Government could save itself only if it refrained from presenting any measures which affected provincial fortunes to an appreciable extent. This it could not do. Increased finance was essential. Loans were out of the question. Taxation was the only alternative source of revenue, and stamp duties the proposed mode of obtaining it.

This financial issue unified all the malcontents as nothing else could have done. Few representatives relished the thought of supporting increased taxation immediately prior to a general election. Nor were they convinced of its necessity. Viewing the proposed colonial defence force as inadequate, they saw no point in voting the means to establish it. Of most importance, however, was the fundamental change of thinking which the Government's financial proposals represented. Initially not even Weld had envisaged providing for military expenditure out of revenue rather than loan. In his March memorandum he had stressed that the future internal defence of the colony must for the next few years be provided mainly by borrowed capital. He had also stated explicitly that, if the

81. PD, 1864-6, pp.664-6.
82. ODT, 9 October 1865, p.4f-g for illustration of the strength of opposition feeling.
current rate of war expenditure continued and the loan money was thereby rapidly exhausted, 'Ministers have no expectation that the Colony will be able financially to assume the charge of its internal defence within any assignable space of time'.

Now, with the continuance of that war expenditure and the Imperial Government's refusal to grant further financial assistance, Weld and his colleagues were, out of necessity, adopting a standpoint which previously they themselves had dismissed as untenable.

With Weld again ill and absent from the House, Sewell took the lead. Not without difficulty the Attorney-General succeeded in pushing government proposals through against strong opposition, but on 10 October a motion to go into committee on stamp duties was carried only by the Speaker's casting vote. Although a meeting of their ostensible supporters that very morning had revealed that the Government theoretically commanded an absolute majority in both Houses, this vote confirmed ministerial suspicions that in three or four quarters allegiance was but fainthearted. Then Vogel put a motion 'which would have deranged the whole plan of Finance if carried': 'That, in the distribution of provincial revenue, the stamp duties be placed on the same footing as

---

83. AJHR, 1865, A1, No.7, pp.7-8.
84. 'Return Shewing the Present Monthly Cost of the Colonial Forces', AJHR, 1866, A14.
86. PD, 1864-6, pp.667-8.
88. ibid., p.227.
Customs duties.' The House divided 17:17. Once again the Government was spared defeat only by the Speaker's casting vote. But this time ministers had had enough. The House was adjourned until Friday 13 October. Resignation was imminent.

Meeting at Weld's on Thursday morning, ministers rejected the idea of compromise, agreed on resignation, and determined to recommend that Grey send for Stafford. There were a number of considerations behind these decisions. Weld's ill health was a principal factor. Suffering from a 'derangement of the digestion' and 'much oppression in his head', the Premier's frequent absence from the House caused supporters to become languid and work disorganised. Colleagues themselves readily admitted that Weld alone could keep the party together. 'Without him we could do nothing with our team', wrote Harry Atkinson. Other personal inclinations no doubt reinforced the argument for resignation. Fitzherbert was still recovering from scarlet fever; Richmond in particular was finding the separation from his wife and family intolerable; Atkinson longed for, yet almost feared to return to, Taranaki. FitzGerald was torn between the demands of his private business affairs and the desire to persist in his native policy. Sewell constantly professed a wish to be free of the wearisome tasks.

89. PD, 1864-6, pp.671-2.
91. J.C.Richmond to Mary Richmond, 19 October 1865, R-A Papers, II, 191.
92. ibid., H.A.Atkinson to A.S.Atkinson, 19 October 1865, 190.
93. loc. cit.
94. FitzGerald to Selse, 15 October 1865, Selse MSS., II, No.162.
Yet resignation was in no way to be regarded as an acceptance of defeat. Rather it was intended as a strong tactical move. Stafford could 'try his hand' for a few months with a policy based on retaining the troops and then, Sewell predicted, he would receive such a stunning rebuke by return mail that that would be 'the end to that'. The experience would serve as a salutary lesson to Stafford and his cohorts; Weld would be better after a few months' rest; and by next session the colonists would be prepared to accept the clearly defined policy which the Self-Reliant ministry had offered. To struggle on now, faintly supported in the House, the colony not really behind them, would almost certainly mean defeat next session. By that time too the imperial authorities might have modified their stand, the 'cold sneering unsympathizing' tone of Cardwell's recent despatch in which the Secretary of State for Colonies declined any guarantee of further imperial financial assistance having completely disillusioned ministers who had remained unrealistically optimistic about the generosity of John Bull.

Although a change of imperial heart was unlikely, in many ways this scheme made sense. A few months would demonstrate

95. Sewell Journal, III, entry beginning 8 October 1865, p.221.
96. Ibid., entry beginning 15 October 1865, p.228.
97. Ibid., entry beginning 8 October 1865, p.221; Cardwell to Grey, 26 July 1865, AJHR, 1865, A6, No.28, pp.25-27. Bowen to Selfe, 15 October 1865, Selfe MSS., II, No.160: 'It must be confessed that the coldness and harshness of Cardwell's last despatch has done much to dishearten the Colony especially the Middle Island ....'
whether the various factions of the opposition bloc could coalesce into a coherent party under Stafford's leadership. It would be time too to see if Stafford could produce an alternative policy any more acceptable to the colony at large. Clearly members of the outgoing ministry did not rate his prospects very highly. But once again ministerial calculations revealed a fundamental error: they had failed to consider the reaction of Governor Grey.

On Thursday evening Weld and his associates again conferred. Weld reported that Grey, apparently with Stafford's concurrence, had called that afternoon and revealed his promise to give his new premier a dissolution if requested. But Grey had then hinted that his ex-ministers might care to reconsider their resignation. "It was a queer kind of thing to do", Sewell commented. "One hardly knew how to take it. I believe that the Governor had a feeble kind of leaning towards bringing us back again, and he thought the announcement of his intention to help Stafford with a dissolution if asked for, might induce us to retract our decision. Also, he no doubt wanted to gather our views, as to the course he had promised to take."

Resolving to read Grey a lesson in constitutional procedure, the erstwhile ministers agreed that Weld should write to the Governor pointing out that, having resigned, they could offer no advice to His Excellency as to what he should or should not do. The question of dissolution was one for His Excellency to decide under constitutional advice; "always provided that the H of R voted supplies without which a dissolution would be
impracticable'. Sewell sensed that there was something ambiguous about Grey's communication, as if he intended to dissolve without supplies, but the Attorney-General scouted the idea that Stafford would propose or Grey accede to such a 'monstrous' course. 98

When the House reassembled on 13 October, an ailing 99 Weld notified members of his ministry's retirement the previous day. Voting in recent divisions had revealed that his Government no longer commanded a sufficiently strong majority to enable it to retain office 'with credit to ourselves or benefit to the country'. Yet despite the House's obvious reluctance to back his ministry on essential financial questions, Weld was still confident that his policy would be eventually upheld. 'I believe its principles have taken root in this colony', he declared. 'I believe that, though set aside now, it will triumph hereafter.' 100 Then, at Stafford's request, the House again adjourned, this time to give the incoming premier an opportunity to form a cabinet - if not a policy.

As ex-ministers had anticipated, Stafford experienced considerable difficulty in finding other members willing to accept office with him. 101 What they had not expected were


99. M.Richmond to Gore Browne, 12 October 1865, Gore Browne MSS., No.56, GB 1/3: 'poor fellow he has looked wretched lately and has not only looked so but has been very ill indeed.'

100. PD, 1864-6, pp.675-6.

101. Note also G.Friend to McLean, 14 October 1865, McLean MSS., P.224, No.10; J.Hall to Selfe, 15 October 1865, Selfe MSS., II, No.161; M.Richmond to Gore Browne, 25 October 1865, Gore Browne MSS., No.58, GB 1/3.
the tactics Stafford and Grey between them were prepared to use to safeguard Stafford's position. Disquieting rumours soon spread round the capital city to the effect that Grey was prepared to grant the new premier a dissolution even if the House refused to grant supplies. A note from Robert Pharazyn, member for Rangitikei, seemed to confirm this:

After I had positively refused to accept office, Mr Stafford told me that he wished it to be generally known that under no circumstances could this House turn him out, as in the event of a refusal to grant supplies, he had the power of dissolving without this having been done, & has determined to use it & appeal to the Country. He said he did not wish to use this as a threat, & that it would be highly improper to make the statement in the House but he wished me to make his determination known in order to prevent factious opposition.102

When challenged on this point in the House, Stafford prevaricated. He demanded FitzGerald put the question formally; then flatly denied that he had requested any such promise from Grey.103 Opposition members were not convinced - and for good reason. On 13 October Stafford had explicitly requested Grey’s assurance that he would be granted a

102. Pharazyn to Weld, n.d. [October 1865], Weld MSS., No.47a. Stafford's 1865 Cabinet eventually comprised J. Prendergast (Attorney General); T.M. Haultain (Defence); A.H. Russell (Native Affairs); J. Paterson (without portfolio). Stafford was Colonial Secretary, Colonial Treasurer and Postmaster General.

103. PD, 1864-6, pp.678-9, 687.
Stafford's ministerial statement had in no way allayed suspicion as to his intentions. To all outward appearances, his policy was virtually that of the previous Government: Stafford merely promised to be able to implement it for £240,000 less than Fitzherbert's estimate. 'We believe', he pontificated, 'that the unity of the colony can best be maintained, if it is to be maintained, by economizing the expenditure of the General Government, and that the true policy of self-reliance is not to enter into obligations which we cannot by ourselves meet.'

On the question of troop removal the Premier insisted that he was perfectly content to leave the arrangements already made entirely undisturbed. In effect, Stafford would leave the details of withdrawal entirely in the Governor's hands. He no more than Grey would press for the speedy implementation of imperial instructions.

This standpoint on the troops ex-ministers had expected. But when Sewell gave notice on 19 October that he would move

104. Stafford to Grey, 13 October 1865, Stafford MSS., F.44, No.1; Rutherford, p.540 for a defence of Grey's procedure on this occasion. And note W.Colenso to Stafford, 14 October 1865, Stafford MSS., F.50, No.1 which lists as Stafford's chief supporters: G.Brodie (Goldfields), W.T.Buckland (Raglan), A.J.Burns (Bruce), H.Carleton (Bay of Islands), W.Colenso (Napier), R.J.Creighton (Parnell), G.Graham (Newton), T.M.Haultain (Franklin), T.Henderson (Northern Division), J.Macandrew (Bruce), J.Munro (Marsden), J.O'Neill (Northern Division), G.M.O'Rorke (Town of Onehunga), J.Paterson (Dunedin South), W.H.Reynolds (Dunedin South), T.Russell (City of Auckland East), J.Vogel (Dunedin North), James Williamson (City of Auckland West), John Williamson (City of Auckland West).

105. PD, 1864-6, pp.684-7; M.Richmond to Gore Browne, 25 October 1865.
a vote of no-confidence in the new ministry. Stafford's answer was a clear indication that any such move would be useless. He would retain office whatever the outcome. And for the final nine days of the session, Stafford effectually forestalled any sustained opposition by holding out the threat of dissolution, with or without supplies. The steadily diminishing size of the House worked to his advantage also. Three months was too long for many politicians to be absent from their families and private affairs. Few of those remaining had the energy or the inclination to support Sewell who, in a manner reminiscent of 1854, continued to attack an administration which he felt was holding power by unconstitutional means. But even Sewell recognised the futility of opposition. Beyond exposing the fallacies of Stafford's financial calculations, there was nothing further the ex-Attorney-General could do. The hard core of Weld's supporters had dispersed. Weld himself had retreated to Brackenfield. There was no one able or prepared to take Stafford's place. The House was prorogued on 30 October.

News of Weld's resignation came as something of a shock to most local publicists. While practically every editorial writer had predicted a hard battle over financial matters,

108. WL, 26 October 1865, p.4f.
109. PD, 1864-6, p.745.
none had really contemplated defeat over the issue. As the *Lyttleton Times* observed, the hard core of Auckland and Otago antagonists had gone to the Assembly with the aim of protecting their respective local interests, not with the intention of actually upsetting the Government in the process. Quite how the ministry had lost the 2:1 majority with which it had started the session thus became an object of widespread speculation, with the *Lyttleton Times* and the *Nelson Examiner* publishing by far the best analyses.

Both observers agreed that the Government's financial policy had been the crucial factor. Any ministry always had its doubtful supporters, the Nelsonian noted, and any government must always propose unpalatable measures. The call for further taxation had precipitated Featherson's defection and his move had been imitated by other Wellington representatives. For much the same reason isolated dissentients from Napier, Nelson, Canterbury and Southland had augmented opposition ranks.

Both commentators felt ministers themselves were largely responsible for their defeat. The *Nelson Examiner* referred to

110. *WI*, 26 September 1865, p.5a; 3 October 1865, p.4e-f; 14 October 1865, pp.4f, 5a-c; *NE*, 28 September 1865, pp.2f, 3a; 7 October 1865, p.2d-e; 21 October 1865, p.2f; *LT*, 4 October 1865, p.2b; 14 October 1865, p.4e; 17 October 1865, p.2b-c; *ODT*, 9 October 1865, p.4f-g; 18 October 1865, p.5e-f; *Press*, 17 October 1865, p.2d-f; 21 October 1865, p.2b-d; 28 October 1865, p.2c-d; *HBH*, 21 October 1865, p.3a; *TH*, 21 October 1865, p.3c.

111. *LT*, 14 November 1865, p.4d.
errors of parliamentary management, the *Lyttelton Times*
categorised accident, the state of public affairs, and deficient
self-reliance. Weld and his colleagues had failed to exert
sufficient pressure to force government measures through the
House, according to the Nelson paper. Furthermore the
Estimates had allowed ground for cavil, expenditure on the
new summer house for the Governor at Lowry Bay, Wellington,
being a particularly contentious item. Weld's ill health
was the accidental factor contributing to the ministry's defeat
as far as the *Lyttelton Times* could gather. On Weld personally
had centred the regard and affection of the 'party' which had
supported the Government; in his absence his colleagues had
been unable to retain the confidence of the House. The second
category referred to the financial dilemma in which ministers
found themselves when they realised that all the loan money
had been spent. The Government had either to give up its
self-reliant policy altogether or to go ahead regardless of
the means. 'On the one side was humiliation; on the other
side a desperate finance.' Weld had chosen the latter course.
None disputed the chivalrous motives which had prompted his
decision to do so but, the Lyttelton commentator continued:
'It was impossible that in committee of supply, and in all the
stages through which the financial proposals of the Government
had to pass and be discussed, the sentiment of chivalry should
not fade out of men's minds, and the impracticability of the
scheme force itself upon their consideration.' Thus the
organised opposition to Weld's ministry had grown from weakness
to strength because of the increasing repugnance among repres-
entatives to a policy which contemplated enormous expenditure
without providing the means of paying for it. 112

112. ibid., 14 November 1865, p.4d-f; *NE*, 11 November 1865,
p.5b-d.
While there was some feeling in provincial press circles that the ministry had quit office rather hastily,\(^{113}\) there was little enthusiasm manifest for Weld’s successor. The *Nelson Examiner* granted Stafford the benefit of experience but doubted whether he would succeed in conducting colonial affairs any better or with less expense.\(^ {114}\) The *Taranaki Herald* thought Stafford’s first priority would be to do something about his extremely threadbare political reputation.\(^ {115}\) In the columns of the *Wellington Independent* the change of ministry was seen as little short of disastrous. The opposition had driven from office the most honest, straightforward and independent ministry New Zealand had ever possessed; this would have the worst possible effect on the colony’s reputation in England. The *Independent* was critical of the lukewarm support given Weld by Wellington representatives. Clearly self-reliance had been good to talk and to write articles about. That cost nothing. ‘But when the price was to be paid, it then appeared that a considerable number of the elected legislators of New Zealand had not associated the notion of sacrifice with the general desire for power.’\(^ {116}\) The *Otago Daily Times*, however, hailed Stafford’s ministry as evidence of New Zealand’s return to constitutional rule. The Weld ministry, intoxicated with their success, had rioted in the power conceded to them, explained the southern commentator. ‘They entered upon a deliberate course of deception with the Imperial Government; contracted huge liabilities, and shamelessly purchased political support by extravagant expenditure in the Province of Wellington. In short, they attempted to establish an autocracy

---

113. *TH*, 21 October 1865, p.3c, though note 8 November 1865, p.2a-b; *LT*, 17 October 1865, p.2f.
114. *NE*, 21 October 1865, p.3a.
115. *TH*, 21 October 1865, p.3c.
116. *WI*, 14 October 1865, pp.4f, 5a-c.
based upon their independence of all control.\textsuperscript{117}

Private comment extant reflects a similar range of reactions - though none quite as extreme as that of the Otago Daily Times. One observer railed against the 'factional opposition of the Aucklandites & the lukewarmness & treachery of the Wellington party';\textsuperscript{118} another attributed the House's loss of confidence in the ministry largely to the conduct and policy of FitzGerald.\textsuperscript{119} John Hall, Legislative Councillor from Canterbury, felt the illness of Weld had been crucial. The Premier's absence from the House had been 'very much felt' as some of his team were 'sadly wanting in discretion'.\textsuperscript{120} Jane Atkinson gained the impression from the 'illustrious member for Omata' (F.U. Gledhill) that ministers had been rather hasty in their decision to resign but, she added sympathetically: 'I do not wonder that you were all personally weary & disgusted.' The prospect of Stafford and a 'set of nobodies' managing affairs even for six months had little appeal. 'His conduct has shown him so devoid of all high principle & real public spirit, that one feels sure he will not scruple at ... any course likely to please the vulgar kind of Otago & Auckland.'\textsuperscript{121} Similarly, Arthur Atkinson thought resignation instead of dissolution a great mistake.\textsuperscript{122} But T.B. Gillies, formerly

\begin{enumerate}
\item[117.] \textit{ODT}, 2 November 1865, p.4c-d.
\item[118.] R. Strang to McLean, 14 October 1865, McLean MSS., F.389.
\item[119.] M. Richmond to Gore Browne, 12 October 1865.
\item[120.] Hall to Selfe, 15 October 1865.
\item[121.] J.M. Atkinson to H.A. Atkinson, 20 October 1865, H.A. Atkinson MSS.
\item[122.] A.S. Atkinson Journal, 20 October 1865.
\end{enumerate}
member for Bruce, was confident the change from the Weld 'self-conceit policy' would prove of benefit to the country. 123

Concerning east coast affairs, however, Ormond quickly found Stafford more parsimonious and less satisfactory to deal with than ever Weld and his associates had been. 124

At a meeting in the Napier Council Chamber, William Colenso stressed that ministers fell essentially because they chose to fall. The name of Weld was of itself a tower of strength: 'But it was very questionable whether he was well mated with those who worked with him.' Listing a number of measures which had alienated members, Colenso clearly felt that the Government's principal weakness was ministers' refusal to alter anything they brought before the House. They would not accept the least suggestion, he declared; they made no effort to conciliate; and did not hesitate to snub any member, even amongst their own supporters. 125

David Monro thought other factors more important.

Writing to former Speaker, Sir Charles Clifford, Monro noted:

It is a monstrous pity that Weld felt himself under the necessity of resigning last session. Under his guidance New Zealand at home was recovering a little of the character and credit which she had lost. I am afraid that the ousting of the Weld ministry will destroy all this. It will destroy all confidence at home in our stability & consistency; and our vacillation with regard to the employment of the Imperial troops will bring down upon us the bitterest satire & contempt of the 'Times' & 'Saturday Review'. It was a very unfortunate affair. During the whole of last Session,

123. T.B.Gillies to McLean, 1 November 1865, McLean MSS., F.228, No.17.

124. J.D.Ormond to McLean, 8 November 1865, McLean MSS., F.326, No.64; ibid., 15 November 1865, No.65; ibid., Stafford to McLean, 3 November 1865, F.384, No.1; ibid., 3 December 1865, No.2.

125. HBH, 25 November 1865, p.3b-e.
Weld was extremely ill and could not take that share in the management of public business which he wd like to have taken. Fitzherbert was also away for a length of time with scarlet fever in his family. The consequence of the want of a proper head of the Ministry was manifest in a great want of tact & management. The accession of FitzGerald to the office of Native Minister brought very little strength to them, though I dont see what better they could have done. And this was followed by the greatest mistake of the Session a peace proclamation in which a great many natives were pardoned who had had proceedings commenced against them for 'wilful murder'. Two of the natives thus pardoned beforehand were men who at the very time were under trial by the Supreme Court at Auckland, and who were actually found guilty of murder & sentenced to be hanged. The Weld Ministry also exhibited a great want of tact in the way in which they brought forward their financial proposals. They insisted for instance on the House agreeing to accept a scheme of stamp duties before they had gone into supply or satisfied themselves in any way that additional taxation was a necessity. With more tact & management the Weld Ministry ought to have stood and I cannot but regard it as a great misfortune that they resigned. 126

Ex-premier Weld might well have seconded Monro's conclusion, even if he disagreed with other of the Speaker's findings. Back at Brackenfield, slowly recovering from what seems to have been a state of complete nervous exhaustion, Weld reviewed Stafford's proceedings with a sense of disillusionment verging on despair for the future of the colony. Writing to his cousin, he declared:

As to politics, Stafford's conduct has placed NZd at the very lowest ebb of degradation. When I went out the Wellington public scourged their members back into my fold & I had again a majority ready to put me in again were it not that Stafford said that he had a promise from Grey to dissolve with or without supplies & that he would do so 'if the House was mutinous' or carried a vote of want of confidence against him.

126. Monro to Clifford, 10 January 1866, Clifford MSS.
& that he would not allow the most necessary measures to pass in that case (such as the Representation Act). As to his policy he had none, he would retrench (in reality he has exceeded our estimates on less revenue) he would not press his income tax scheme unless the people wished it nor would he object to our stamp duty scheme if the people did not object he would not advise the retention of the troops etc etc. He pretended in fact to adopt our policy but in the Lords Col Russell let the cat out of the bag he objected to a single soldier going home & Col Haultain & indeed all Stafford’s followers are strong advocates for keeping the troops & trying to bleed & bleeding John Bull. I never saw such a miserable affair as the new ministry all the political intelligence of both Houses against them (Featherston absent for them no doubt at least against us). The constitution is in fact suspended the House reduced to a debating society to register Stafford’s edicts under threat of dissolution with or without supplies & suspension of all public business - Stafford has no ministry he holds half the offices himself. Nothing can come of this but renewed difficulties.

At the very moment when affairs were in a ticklish state and in need of delicate handling, Weld continued, everything was being thrown to the winds and the imperial troops would be retained.

The Aucklanders & contractors are of course triumphant. The financial position of the Colony is the most serious one however. We had set things square we owed 900,000£ when we entered office & we owed nothing or next to nothing when we left it, and we saw our way clearly for the future. I give Stafford a very few months to...[missing] the picture & then everybody says that next session I shall be called for to set things square again at the expense of my health & purse & to the great discomfort of my family. My own opinion is however that what with provincial jealousies and log rolling we are not likely to have anything worthy of the name of government again in N Zealand until the Colony has drank deeply of disgrace & disaster - Stafford must continue to eat endless dirt
or be torn to pieces by the Macandrews & Vogels and O’Neills the jackals of his pack. I could have kept in office by dodging & ...\textit{missing} easily for instance giving up a native reserve to the Dunedin municipality which they claimed would have probably secured me the Otago votes. Is not such a thing as that disgraceful to the Colony - such a set of men united to the contractors of Auckland are worthy supporters of a ministry whose policy is equivocation. As for myself here & in Wellington I am most triumphant the manner in which my name is always received at the meetings here is most gratifying & all classes are unanimous.

I shall myself hold a meeting this week at Chchurch. Auckland is of course furious against me the\textit{y} expect the troops & seat of Govt back & the Panama steamers & the land revenue of the South in pledge for their loans - well if they get it, it is worth shouting for. Hawkes Bay Taranaki & generally Nelson are with me...\textit{If} I can in honour I shall avoid going ...\textit{intq} the ministry again and shall have as little as possible to do with NZ politics for some years at all events. I should like very much to go home soon for some years at all events if we could manage our affairs here .... As soon as I am strong enough I shall ride to Stonyhurst & shall go ... to Flaxbourne in January.\footnote{127}

The Christchurch meeting went ahead as scheduled on 17 November and was a resounding success. Addressing a capacity audience Weld reviewed his reasons for taking office and his policies while in power. The misdeeds of the Fox-Whitaker ministry he dismissed in scathing terms: that government having made the name of New Zealand 'stink in the nostrils of the people of England', its leaders had then thrown down the reins of office without coming to the Assembly to give an account of their stewardship. Weld had taken up those reins essentially to try to retrieve the honour of the colony.

\footnote{127. ibid., Weld to Clifford, 13 November 1865.}
His government's native and financial policies Weld defended staunchly. Only over the employment of the imperial troops did he admit that he would have acted differently, could he have foreseen that Cameron would interfere in political matters and turn into a three month campaign what might have been an expedition of six weeks. And as for his own resignation? 'Little combinations had forced the Government out, alliances of men who put local interests before the interests of the colony at large.' At the next election, Weld cautioned his listeners, he hoped that they would return men who were politically honest and who would show their colours.

Before sitting down, he would say that, though he was beaten, and though the principle of self-reliance had been thrown into the background, he felt that the defeat was almost a triumph, for no threat, no combination, and no log-rolling could possibly set aside the great principle which he had had the honour to advocate (Applause). The policy had been known by his name, but the principles were those of greater men than himself both here and in England. He would, however, take this credit, that God gave him the power of seeing that the time had come for putting those principles into action and also the strength of mind to enunciate them to the colony. 128

After further discussion, during which Sewell pointed out how much worse provincial fortunes would be under Stafford's arrangement of the customs revenue, Weld was nominated as the most fit man to represent the city of Christchurch in the next election. The vote was seconded and carried by

128. LT, 18 November 1865, p.2c-e. Also Press, 20 November 1865, p.2c-d. NE, 2 December 1865, p.2d-e compares Weld's speech at Christchurch with that of Macandrew at Port Chalmers. (For Macandrew's address, ibid., 2 December 1865, p.3c-f).
acclamation. It was a fitting and sincere tribute to Weld from his supporters, and it was recognised as such by local commentators. Nevertheless, there was some truth in the Lyttleton Times' criticism that Weld had left much of government policy unexplained: 'It was as if the commander of an army were to be congratulated on his personal bravery, while the question of his generalship was left unsettled.'

But it was by no means certain that Weld would be able to carry on in active public life. The strain and excitement of the Christchurch meeting caused a relapse of some kind and forced Weld to think seriously of complete retirement from colonial politics. He viewed the prospect with very mixed feelings. On the one hand he recognised that he was at the height of his political popularity in Canterbury and also, he thought, amongst the 'gentlemen' of the colony in general. The success of colonial troops sent to the east coast on his insistence and against Grey's objections reinforced his desire

---

129. LT, 18 November 1865, p.2e. Note also Sewell Journal, III, entry beginning 25 November 1865, p.274: 'Canterbury is uproarious in favour of Weld'; Cracroft Wilson to H.A. Atkinson, 25 November 1865, H.A. Atkinson MSS.: 'Politics are all the rage now in Canterbury and I do not think that Stafford will get many supporters from among the members who are about to be elected'; Bowen to Selse, 15 December 1865, Selse MSS., II, No.165: 'It is really gratifying to see how thoroughly the great mass of the public have appreciated a fellow like Weld....'

130. LT, 20 November 1865, p.2c.

131. Bowen to Selse, 15 December 1865.
to carry on. 132 But ill health, the circumstances of his resignation and the ensuing political manoeuvrings in the House made him loath to continue. 'I hardly know how in the face of provincial jealousies & such men as Macandrew leading & as Stafford condescending to recognize him & support him, any gentleman can carry on Govt', Weld confided to Gore Browne. 'I could have held office for years at the expense of honor. As to my policy that is a generally admitted success even Stafford affects not to depart from it.'

Judge Richmond was here the other day he did not seem much surprised at Stafford's unconstitutional action to retain office (which did surprise me).... Sir G. Grey is I think in a very false position - curiously enough his last chance of retrieving himself was through my success I dont know how he liked the whole credit being given to me not him in Parliament & in the English press but he behaved well to me during all my term of office. If since he promised Stafford a dissolution even without a proper ministry having been formed or supplies granted as Stafford declared he had, I suppose he thought that Stafford would help him to keep the troops. Stafford of course wishes to do so & that is the price of Auckland support, but Stafford wishes to throw the odium at home on the Governor. Stafford's game is however too palpable not to be seen through at home. I expect it will end in a commissioner being sent out. Many are the wishes that you were once more Governor. For my own part I hope we shall meet in England. I am not gaining strength and though I have consented to sit for Christchurch I think now that I shall have to give up politics. I am expecting a medical man here to advise me on the subject & shall abide by his advice. The resident doctor strongly urges me to retire at once from public life - in that case I shall hope to leave for England in 18

132. For correspondence on this issue, see Weld to McLean, 3 July 1865, Private & Confidential, McLean MSS., F.408, No.9; ibid., August 1865, Unofficial, No.10; ibid., J.C.Richmond to McLean, 25 August 1865, F.355, No.2; D.McLean to H.A.Atkinson, 1 November 1865, R-A Papers, II,194. Also Weld to McLean, 10 November 1865, McLean MSS., F.408, No.17; ibid., 22 October 1866, No.11; Sewell Journal, III, entry beginning 25 November 1865, p.277.
months unless the doctors order me home sooner. I have a filly 'Policy' by Potentate running tomorrow at the Christchurch races but the Doctor won't let me go to town to see it which is very annoying. My place is getting really beautiful. Next year it will be charming & I shall regret leaving it perhaps for ever. So will my wife we often wish we could take it home with us. The children are thriving & growing up very pretty brats & a new one is expected this autumn! - I hope you will find time to write to me. You will see many criticisms on me no doubt - you I am sure will not for a moment believe me capable of disrespect to the British army because knowing what would retrieve the British prestige & honor of our name I did it at the risk of sneers & in the teeth of a General. I had my duty to do to the Queen, to the Colony & to England. I believe I did it honestly & thank God successfully. Can Cameron say as much? At all events if I now retire from public life I can say that I am not aware of any act of my public life which was not based on the desire of doing what was for the public good nor of having taken any line of policy which I should wish to recall or to have acted differently under the circumstances. Of course I don't mean to take credit for infallibility I am too good a Catholic you will say for that! but no one claims infallibility in acts (only in Doctrinal decisions) even for the Pope. I was made very happy by the cordiality of Richmond's approval of my doings I had not seen him since 1861 & hardly even heard from him. I hope to have your approval I need not say how I value it. 133

Within days came the announcement of Weld's retirement from colonial politics. He withdrew his candidacy for the Christchurch seat and wrote to distant colleagues, informing them of his decision, thanking them for past support.

declaring his appreciation of services rendered. All hope that a 'Weld party' would challenge Stafford's dominance in the next session was thus at an end. No one could take Weld's place, Sewell noted on receiving the news. Weld was the only man who could have led a party against the corrupt provincial combinations of which Stafford was the head. 'Failing him, the Colony must, I fear submit to leave matters in Stafford's hands until the day of retribution overtakes him.'

Three years later, removed by time and place from the contentious atmosphere of colonial politics, Weld was able to review the fate of his ministry in a more detached manner. In the last analysis, he concluded, his defeat had been due to two factors: the political corruption of provincialism, and the policy of the Imperial Government. Members came up to the Assembly, he explained, less as members than as bands of provincial delegates. They would consent to a tax, for instance, only on the condition that so much of it was to go

134. Weld to H.A.Atkinson, 28 January 1866, H.A.Atkinson MSS.: 'You will bear witness to me that I have stood by Taranaki as if I was a Taranaki man I consider that Taranaki has done honour to the West Country men of whom I am one'; Weld to Mantell, 29 January 1866, Mantell MSS.: 'I like you have fallen from the high estate of politics (or have mounted to the higher heaven, which you like). Enclosed in this letter is a clipping of Weld's address to the electors of the City of Christchurch, 18 January 1866, withdrawing his candidacy. See also Weld to C.W.Richmond, 27 January 1866, R-A Papers, II, 204. Also Weld to Grey, 23 January 1866, Grey MSS., W 26, No.12; ibid., 27 January 1866, No.13.

135. Note T.M.Haultain to Stafford, 27 January 1866, Stafford MSS., F.38a, No.1.

home to their provinces, the result being that a colonial ministry did not so much stand or fall by its general policy - which might be excellent - but rather by its answer to the question of what would be given to the provinces. It thus became the direct interest of members, if they wished to stand well with their respective provinces, to starve the general government; 'local improvements are always locally of more interest than general necessities, - and so the dish of meat of the general Government is often devoured before its eyes'. That, Weld continued, was why the general government, except at times of imminent public danger or great excitement, would be in fact sold to the highest bidder, and why it could only be held by sacrificing everything to the necessity of making terms with the provinces.

With regard to the second factor, Weld had this to say:

Any measures which may lead a party amongst the colonists to believe that England will always send her troops if the Colony cries out for them, weakens the hands of any colonial ministry which may take its stand on self-reliance and self-exertion; my ministry would have remained in office, measures of native policy and defence measures would have been carried out, and the present disasters averted, had the British troops been removed when first I requested it; the delay encouraged those, who from timidity, policy, or interest, desired the retention of the troops, and the opposition was proportionately strengthened. I may almost say that in this respect, I was unwittingly sacrificed by the Imperial Government, though I was carrying out a policy which they thoroughly approved and wished to see put into effect.\(^{137}\)

His conclusions were valid - up to a point: as explanations for defeat they were inadequate. For the basic weakness

of the ministry had been the very restricted nature of its support. From the beginning, personal respect not political conviction had motivated Weld's followers; allegiance to Weld personally, not belief in his policy had been the cohesive force of the 'Weld party'. Of those representatives who upheld self-reliance in principle, few thought it practicable. None had the unshakable conviction of the premier that his solution was the only solution to New Zealand's difficulties. The fiasco of the west coast campaign and its attendant financial complications led most members to expect major modifications of some sort. But major modification implied a compromise over Weld's original objectives, and for him that was inconceivable.

Weld's whole approach to politics was essentially a moralistic one. For him there was no distinction between a personal and a political code of behaviour. A course of action was either right or wrong, black or white; for Weld there was no grey. Yet since he never attempted to disguise this attitude, and since he himself expected his policy to be challenged as quixotic, perhaps the most curious aspect of his premiership is the fact that a collection of fairly hard-headed colonial representatives were prepared, initially at least, to accept his leadership.

The reason for this acceptance lies essentially in the reputation which Weld had established for himself in colonial circles over the preceding twenty years. In his several roles as pioneer, pastoralist, politician, author, explorer, yachtsman, racehorse owner; as a J.P. and a Catholic; even as first president of the Canterbury Acclimatisation Society, Weld

138. LT, 26 May 1864, p.3a. See Weld to Grey, 14 April 1865; 13 May 1865; 25 November 1865, Grey MSS., W 26, No 11 for evidence of this interest which Weld and Grey had in common.
had built up a personal standing of considerable stature in several provincial communities. Early evidence of this had been Weld's inclusion in the mixed ministry of 1854; ample illustration was provided by press reaction to Weld's elevation to the premiership. The image of Weld as a *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche* was no illusion. In social circles Weld's contemporaries saw him as a true gentleman; in the political sphere he had gained, deservedly, a name for absolute honesty and integrity. At a time when distrust was endemic, this in itself was no mean achievement.

Weld was not one to sway by his oratory. His manner of speaking was usually hesitant, his delivery jerky. The *Nelson Examiner* was prepared to give him credit for thinking before he spoke, but even so the thoughts voiced were not particularly profound. Weld's ideas on matters of internal policy were the legacy of his own practical experience, his native policy in particular revealing the limitations of the understanding so gained. His ideas on wider aspects of colonial policy, on the relations between Great Britain and her outposts of empire for instance, were fundamentally the outcome of his association with John Robert Godley, an intellectual debt which Weld freely acknowledged.

Weld's colleagues were in no way oblivious of his strengths and weaknesses. Comparing him with Featherston, Sewell admitted that Weld had less experience and less capacity for details, but obviously thought it preferable that Weld had

139. Harriet Gore Browne's description, cit. Lovat, p.419.
140. *NE*, 1 December 1864, Supplement, p.1a-d.
the 'larger and juster views'. \textsuperscript{142} Or, as J.C. Richmond commented frankly: 'Never was there a more marked case of noble moral qualities taking the lead of intellectual acuteness. He certainly is not intellectual king of his party. Sewell, FitzGerald, FitzHerbert and others are his superiors in knowledge and bare intellect and device, but he alone could keep the party together...'.\textsuperscript{143}

This personal stature was enough to carry Weld into office but it was an insufficient force in itself to counteract the doubts and objections which subsequent attempts to implement his self-reliant policy aroused. If Weld's colleagues shared these doubts, bonds of loyalty nevertheless united them in defence of that policy against opposition attack. Independent representatives felt no comparable sense of obligation. As one notable Canterbury 'defector', Crosbie Ward, explained, Weld's defence policy seemed financially impracticable. Believing that to be the case, Ward continued, he had to choose between voting for Weld and voting according to his own judgment. 'Don't tell me that I was bound, because I accepted Weld's theory that self defence is the duty of the colony, to vote for whatever plan of self defence Weld might propose.' Weld was an able administrator, Ward declared, but he felt that the premier knew little and cared less about the financial condition of the colony.

That he would do nothing wrong and would maintain the honour of New Zealand as its leading man was undeniable; but 'evil is wrought by want of thought'. There was nothing to assure anyone that Mr. Weld would pull the colony through its difficulties, rather the

\textsuperscript{142} Sewell Journal, II, 29 December 1864, p.314.

\textsuperscript{143} J.C. Richmond to Mary Richmond, 19 October 1865.
contrary. The Archbishop of Canterbury is I trust a strictly moral man, but he would probably have made a great mess of the Northern cause had he led the 'Great March', nor could his Grace be trusted to drive his own carriage down Piccadilly. So Mr Weld deserves the name of 'good' but he has not yet earned the title of 'great'. 144

This erosion of personal allegiance was the most important factor behind Weld's defeat. The composition of the ministry and various aspects of government policy had reinforced north-south antagonism, exacerbated provincial jealousies, offended individual members, but no single issue was as destructive of the Government's support as Weld's refusal to modify his basic objective of colonial military self-reliance. As the comments of Ormond and Ward reveal, when representatives were forced to the point of decision, political considerations outweighed personal inclination.

Despite defeat, Weld could still feel that he had achieved something while in office. The seat of government was not again to be removed; colonial troops employed as he had recommended did meet with notable success on the east coast; the imperial troops were eventually to be withdrawn amid prolonged wrangling over liability for their maintenance in the interim. 145 But Weld's principal goals had been peace and full responsible government. One he'd attain. Having accepted 'with entire satisfaction' the December resolutions of the New Zealand Assembly, Her Majesty's Government had also announced that it intended to adhere to and be guided


145. Hensley, passim.
by that policy. The colonial government was to be entirely responsible for its own internal affairs; whatever the inclination of its representative in New Zealand, the Imperial Government no longer retained a discretionary right to interfere. Peace proved more elusive. By the end of the sixties, overt military resistance to European penetration was largely at an end. But the tension between Maori and pakeha was in no way relieved and efforts to find a means of cooperative coexistence were severely handicapped by the legacy of bitterness left by the confiscations of 1864-5.

From founder member of the Wellington Settlers' Constitutional Association to retired prime minister: such was the scope of Weld's political career in New Zealand. This was hardly the future he had envisaged when, from a hut in the Wairarapa, he had sent up a fervent prayer that not all of his life would be spent in managing a station, exploring wilds, hunting boars, or negotiating high treaties and compacts with 'blanketted allies'. As his restlessness at the time of the Crimean War revealed, Weld long fancied himself in military service. But gradually realism prevailed, or rather the belief that if the pattern of his life was not as he had envisaged, it was instead as God had intended. This complete, utter, absolute conviction that he must act according to God's will gave Weld the inner strength and determination to cope with each new situation as it arose. It was this confidence that he would receive divine patronage and protection which helped

---

146. Cardwell to Grey, 26 December 1865, No.113, AJHR, 1866, A1, No.17, p.35. Note also Rogers minute, 19 December 1865, Fortescue minute, 20 December 1865, Cardwell minute, 21 December 1865 on Grey to Cardwell, 14 October 1865, No.126, CO 209/192.
Weld succeed in his earliest days in the Wairarapa. It was this belief that he had been acting with God's guidance which now enabled him to accept his defeat and ill health so philosophically, to take them indeed as a sign that he had done enough in the realm of New Zealand politics. To underestimate the certainty or to ignore the influence of Weld's religious conviction would be totally to misunderstand the man himself.
Sir Frederick Aloysius Weld

Portrait by Venables

Copied from the original in possession of Lt-Col H.J. Weld, Chideock Manor, Bridport, Dorset, England.
Frederick and Mena Weld /c.1859/

Copied from Lovat, photograph facing p.104.
GROUP PHOTOGRAPH  n.d. /c.1866/

From left to right:  Fred A. Weld, Hon Mrs Tollemache, Mena Weld, Sir Charles Clifford, Mrs Crawford.  

From the Alexander Turnbull Library photographic collection
CHAPTER XI

INTERLUDE: 1866-9

19 Jan 1866

My dear Charles,

I told you before that the doctors generally said that the brain had been overworked & that that was the seat of my illness. I have not been getting better. I spoke to our resident doctor who simply advised me to give up politics and said that to go to England would be best when I could do so. I then sent to Christchurch for Dr Turnbull who I believe to be the ablest Dr in the Colony especially at Diagnosis & one who has the reputation of very plain speaking, rather putting the worst side foremost in fact, they say. He gave me a thorough overhaul poking & tapping & listening over every inch of me from my waist upwards. He pronounced me as follows — lungs quite sound, signs of an old damage to one of them some years ago quite got over 'extinct volcanoes' he said — (I remember the time) Heart quite sound 'particularly health action'— Head, here you come to the fons et origo malorum he thinks that my brain being large & my head deep & I suppose narrow I always have a predisposition to excitability of the brain — that there is no organic disease — that from what I tell him I have never been in an absolutely healthy state fit for hard head work since my great illness in '59 that there is decidedly nothing to create any alarm at present but that unless I am careful I shall in a few years turn into a confirmed invalid for the rest of my life but that care rest & regimen will, it may be confidently hoped, prevent this, that I shall never be fit for such great mental exertion as I have undergone this last year but that after a time under careful treatment I may do an average amount of head work always being watchful not to overdo it. I am to give up all politics & violent head work, be careful not to expose myself too much to hot & glaring sun, and to drink nothing no wine beer etc etc (of course water is nothing) smoking allowed in moderation (I smoke very little nowadays) Going to England is said to be advisable, opinion reserved as to its being necessary. The Doctor admits that I may lose strength by the want of beer & wine but says that it is a secondary consideration & must be got up after — he seems to say that I shall never
be the better for resuming beer & wine that costs me nothing at all to give up, and even smoking nowadays I should not feel as an intolerable deprivation but I confess the prospect about the future as to headwork is not so charming.

However, Weld continued, his feeling was that of relief in knowing the worst, for he was certain that the doctor in question had been completely honest with him.

Beyond this my strongest feeling is that of thankfulness that God has shewn me my course clearly. I was not sure what I ought to do. The political interests of the Colony & of the natives too I think will not be seriously injured at the present crisis by my absence for I fear that under present circumstances I could effect but little - at all events I hope not - but the interests of religion may. For instance it is very probable that a divorce bill would long ago have been passed had I not on more than one occasion prevented it. I refused to join a former ministry except on a stipulation that it should not be introduced (though the English Govt had advised the Governor to recommend it on the grounds of uniformity to English law & he wished it) and accordingly it was shelved and when in office I stated on two occasions to persons wishing to introduce such a bill that I would make its rejection a cabinet question, that I would put every pressure in my power & that if such a bill was carried I would at once resign for that it should never be said that I held office whilst the country was throwing itself back into barbarism & rejecting Christianity - Well this is one instance how my presence might benefit Catholicity - Then there is church building & all that kind of thing, schools etc. In England I shall be able to help a little but of course shall be poorer than if I was to remain though less at home goes further. Then there is the prospect of a large family & a pinch perhaps on their account in the end & neither Mena nor I are made for pinching though we are not extravagant. Still I think we can afford to educate our brats & live well enough.

1. Weld to Charles Weld, 19 January 1866, Weld Papers, II, No.34.
It was in fact the timing of the return rather than the decision itself which was determined by Weld's illness. As early as 1864 Bowen had made reference to Weld's plans to go home in two or three years, just when all the improvements at Brackenfield would be beginning to tell. 'Poor Mr Godley used always to say that the misfortune of colonisers is that they have two countries.' ² Financially, Mena Weld admitted, it would have been much more beneficial to have waited one or two more years; 'but health is the first consideration - & it would not be worth while for the sake of the having a few hundreds or even thousands more, to run the risk of Fred's being an invalid for life by waiting here till it was too late'. ³

The move could not be made immediately however. Weld's rate of recovery was slow, and arrangements for the future management of the stations could not be made in haste. Reluctant to take sole responsibility for handling Clifford's very considerable assets, Weld pressed his cousin to come out to New Zealand himself. ⁴ As far as Brackenfield was concerned, Weld wished to retain ownership of the property but wanted to rent it to someone reliable. At one stage he was prepared to consider Mena's younger brother as a prospective manager. But nothing came of that scheme - except a warning from Weld to Mena's father to be cautious in sending sons to the colonies. 'Don't send them either here or to South America without a clear idea of what they are to do and without sufficient means', he wrote. 'Not one lad out of ten will in those circumstances be successful - it requires in such a case great

² Bowen to Selfe, 15 October 1864, Selfe MSS., II, No.132.
³ Mena Weld to Mrs Phillips de Lisle, 12 February 1866, Weld Papers, II, No.35. (After 1862 the Phillipps family was known as Phillips de Lisle. See Lovat, p.104)
⁴ Weld to Clifford, 14 April 1866, Clifford MSS.
abilities energy & persuasion to succeed without means &
still higher virtues to keep untainted by the atmosphere that
a needy young adventurer is thrown into. 5

If Weld's convalescence was a long process, it was by
no means a boring one. He was able to spend hours reading,
sketching and painting; race meetings too were a source of
endless pleasure, Weld's latest filly, 'Policy', proving a
consistent place getter. 6 Politics too were of constant
interest. Press reports and personal friends kept him up with
the train of events, Bowen in particular being a frequent
visitor. After a week with the Welds at Brackenfield in July,
Bowen reported: 'He is like the old wk-horse & (contrary to
orders) pricks his ears at the sound of the trumpet. But he
is not strong enough to take part again at present in politics
especially as he feels very keenly the want of decency not to
say chivalry in the arena.' 7 Both men viewed developments
in the Assembly with some amazement. Bowen was astonished
that the reconstituted Stafford ministry should include some of
Weld's former colleagues. 8 Weld on the other hand appreciated

5. Weld to A. Phillips de Lisle, 19 October 1866, Weld Papers,
II, No.36.
And note Weld to G.S. Whitmore, 13 May 1866, G.S.
Whitmore MSS., Hawkes Bay Museum: 'Stafford will
either have to eat endless dirt or rather to continue
eating it or be torn in pieces by his hounds - let him
remain in office as long as you make him grind in my
mill - I fear though that he is quite in the hands of the
radical & ultraprovincial party Featherston to whit. &
has given up all his old views.' I am indebted to Mr
P.A.T. Thwaites for providing this reference.
8. Bowen to Selfe, 6 September 1866, No.184. Fitzherbert
and J.C. Richmond had taken office under Stafford in
August.
their motives but thought they were unwise. He would have preferred his ex-associates to have formed a government of their own; 'if not I prefer a good opposition to a coalition'. Of most concern to Weld, however, was the lack of a Catholic of any weight in the new House. 'However if God wanted my services he would not have turned me out to grass I suppose.'

Clifford arrived early in December 1866, 'looking as jolly as ever'. He and Weld went to Flaxbourne and Stonyhurst, and came to an arrangement for the long-term leasing of their joint properties. Clifford then left at the beginning of February. Weld prepared to follow suit. Brackenfield, valued at £12,000 was put up for lease at an annual rental of £700; the chapel was completed (and still serves the local Catholic community today); a stipend adequate for a priest was guaranteed. Weld's work was complete.

   Weld to Mrs Phillips de Lisle, 4 September 1866, Weld Papers, II, Nos. 37 & 44.
11. ibid., Bowen to Selfe, 17 December 1866, No.196.
12. Details of this arrangement are not readily available, but might well be gleaned from the mass of unsorted manuscript relating to station management in possession of Mr J.B. Douglas-Clifford, Stonyhurst.
14. W.J.W. Hamilton to Selfe, 5 March 1867, Selfe MSS., M1 167/A Du Ho.
Little detail survives of Weld's movements in the next two years, but the main outline is clear. With his wife and four surviving daughters, Weld left New Zealand in April 1867 and on arrival in England spent some time in Dorsetshire, his first son, Humphrey, being born at Chalbury Lodge near Weymouth. The family then moved to stay with relatives at Rotherwas Park, Herefordshire, where a second son was born in November 1868. It was about this time that Weld determined to give expression to a number of ideas - concerning both his past and his future.

The first appeared in pamphlet form. *Notes on New Zealand Affairs: comprising a sketch of its political history, in reference especially to the Native Question; its present position - the policy for the future, with a few general remarks upon the relations of England to her colonies*, was a fairly well-written and useful introduction to readers ignorant of that colony. But it was essentially a personal commentary, revealing many of Weld's prejudices and misconceptions as it gave information on colonial conditions.

The brief survey of events prior to the sixties showed that Weld's earlier opinions remained substantially unchanged. He was still critical of FitzRoy's handling of the Wairau affray and of Heke's war in the north; while to Grey's action of summoning provincial governments first, Weld continued to

16. The Weld family Bible, now in the possession of Lt.-Col. H.J. Weld, Chideock, contains the following entries: Christina, b. 23 June 1860, Wellington; Cecily, b. 10 September 1861, Auckland; Mary, b. 28 August 1863, Brackenfield, d.19 March 1864; Filumena, b. 7 April 1865, Wellington; Edith, b. 27 April 1866, Brackenfield.
18. Weld family Bible.
attribute many of the subsequent political problems of the colony. He dwelt at some length on the 1854 fiasco, insisting that a great number of the difficulties which had since embarrassed New Zealand were traceable to the delays in summoning the Assembly and to the fact that efforts made by a very able and a very honest parliament to place the state engine on the right track were thwarted. 19

Not unexpectedly the governorship of Thomas Gore Browne was favourably reviewed, though particular emphasis was laid on two points: the Crown's retention of responsibility for native affairs during the period when the dangerous feeling of nationality was growing up amongst the Maoris; and the fact that the Waitara war was no conflict over a paltry six hundred acres of land but a collision rendered inevitable by the existence of two governments in one country. 20 The implication was obvious: colonial difficulties were in no way to be regarded as solely colonial responsibility. His own government, Weld continued, had not relied upon military measures alone to resolve the native problem. Rather he had endeavoured to give greater effect to the land court legislation of 1862, believing as he did that this was the most effective mode of giving the natives 'real and substantial justice'. The Act gave the Maoris the means of raising themselves above that communism which was weighing them down. As individual landowners, able either to sell their lands in the open market or to let them, the Maoris would become rich and therefore interested in the maintenance of law and order. 21 Weld was no visionary. Neither he nor his colleagues it seemed could foresee the havoc which

19. Weld, Notes, pp.6-12.
individualisation of land tenure would wreak in Maori society.

The performance of the Self-Reliant ministry; resignation; developments under Stafford²² - Weld's comments on all of these revealed that he had in no way changed his mind as to why he was defeated. Provincialism and lack of cooperation from imperial officials in London and from Cameron in the colony had been the prime factors. Grey was completely absolved. Weld never really appreciated that it was the Governor's duplicity over the imperial troops which had from the very beginning severely jeopardised the Self-Reliant ministry's chances of success and survival.

As for the current crisis in New Zealand native affairs, Weld saw two complementary methods of dealing with the disturbances. One was a suggestion for the colonial government: a reversion to the policy of 1864-5 with the establishment of a constabulary force and a determination to punish outrages with severity yet to treat them as locally as possible. But the colonists could not, unaided, hope to overcome the problems which, Weld reminded his readers, stemmed fundamentally from imperial mismanagement. Presuming that England would not permit, either from motives of self-interest or from a sense of honour, the destruction of the northern island as a colony, she should, Weld suggested, underwrite a loan floated by New Zealand. Borrowed capital, applied to the organisation and maintenance of a force sufficient to suppress current and future uprisings, would allow the southern island to see the end of repeated calls upon its purse. Such a step on the part of

²². ibid., pp.27-50.
the British government would assist the colony immeasurably, and cost Britain nothing. But on no account should the imperial authorities contemplate sending imperial troops to the colony. 'Let the colonists accept self-government, if they are to have self-government, with its duties as well as its rights; thus only will they grow into a nation, with national virtues all the more strongly developed and rooted, because they will have grown amidst storm and adversity.'

Self-government, self-exertion, self-reliance: this was Weld's credo for a colonial policy.

But let it not be thought, that I wish to loosen the tie that binds the Colonies to England; far from it; I know, that not only on theoretical and political grounds, but also from a consideration of the state of public opinion in England, and in the Colonies, that that policy is the only possible policy; but I should all the more desire to strengthen, (and I believe that policy properly carried out, may tend to strengthen,) the moral tie, which binds the Colonies to the Throne and to the Mother country. It is not natural to our race to be governed from a distance; mistakes must occur, jealousies, divided authority, bickerings and recriminations. Remove the occasion of these - I go so far as to say deliberately, that I very much prefer, should occasion require it, the suspension of a constitution, when a Colony cannot govern itself and maintain internal order; to any division of authority, any sham constitutionalism.

Greater efforts had to be made to improve understanding between England and her outposts of Empire, Weld insisted.

I cannot help feeling that England without her Colonies, would be a 'Niobe of Nations;' 'Ships, Colonies and Commerce' have done much to make her what she is - and I should be sorry to see the day.

23. ibid., pp.69-71.
24. ibid., p.76.
when it could be no longer said that the sun did not set upon her dominions. I believe too that that day would add greatly to the misery of her overcrowded population. I cannot but think, that if some of our English public men and writers felt this more strongly, the bond that unites the Colonies to Great Britain would be infinitely strengthened. The Colonies are very sensitive to English public opinion, but that sensitivity is diminished and dies out, when English public opinion is hasty and formed upon insufficient grounds. A part of the public press is fond, I think unreasonably fond, of taunting Colonists with supposed deficiencies instead of criticising in a friendly spirit .... Colonists who have for years devoted their minds to an honest endeavour to solve the great problem of civilizing and saving the native race, though they may be aware that in this very difficult task, mistakes may have been made and no complete success attained, may fairly ask, that their critics should treat them with some consideration, should weigh the difficulties they have had to encounter, should remember that England herself undertook the task and retired from it - and at least, should make themselves thoroughly acquainted with what has been actually done and what left undone.25

For a number of reasons, Weld continued, foreshadowing the imperial federationist of future years, it was in England's interests to promote closer cooperation with her colonies. There were domestic issues, for instance, such as immigration. This, the life-blood of a colony, would soon be a question of no less importance to England, Scotland and Ireland with their increasing populations of men and women 'struggling for life itself, and sinking into deeper and deeper moral and physical degradation'. Yet each one of those men and women, removed to a colony, would not only improve in personal circumstance but would become a consumer of British produce

25. ibid., pp.77-78.
and indirectly an employer of British labour. A great national scheme of emigration was looming in the future, Weld predicted, for the success of which cordial cooperation between imperial and colonial authorities would be necessary.

The defence of the outlying parts of the Empire in case of war was another matter of joint interest. True, any war would probably be decided in European waters, but the effect of the disarrangement of trade, the distress and the consequent discontent of the labouring population at home could be serious. It should not be forgotten, Weld reflected, that the colonists would be involved in Britain's wars through no act of their own nor of their representatives. 'That is the price they pay for the honour and advantage of forming part of a great Empire.' But should they find that they were unprotected and uncared for, 'even their loyalty might break down, and they might seek protection by forming alliances and making commercial regulations to the advantage of Foreign powers'.

This is not impossible at some future day, and is so obvious a danger that I may confidently presume that it has not escaped the attention of British statesmen, and that they will be prepared to consider, as occasion may arise, the great question of external defence in a spirit of reciprocal liberality; in this too they will need, and they may fairly expect, the hearty support of the colonists. A federation of the Australian Colonies, including New Zealand, is another question for the future. In these and all other matters, colonists look to England for counsel, for sympathy, and for support. I feel sure that they will not be disappointed, and that England, whose envoys represent the Crown in those distant regions, will still exercise a large and legitimate influence over them - an influence, affecting as it does, the future of nations yet in their infancy, not lightly to be neglected or thrown away.
On its wise use what destinies may hang, what great portions of the globe may they not hereafter sway! 26

As the latter part of his Notes revealed, Weld had been giving considerable thought to the nature of relations between England and her colonies - and to the role of imperial envoys in particular. These were no idle speculations, for in December 1868 Weld had addressed a letter to the Secretary of State for Colonies, seeking favourable consideration as a prospective governor himself. He had been encouraged to make this request, Weld explained, by the very strong appreciation of his services expressed by successive governors of New Zealand, by the assurance of Gladstone's 'warm and entire sympathy' with the objectives of the self-reliant policy, 'and especially by a very emphatic opinion as to my fitness for such a post, lately expressed to me by Sir G Grey K C B late Governor of the Cape & New Zealand'. Outlining his career while in New Zealand, detailing the objectives and achievements of his administration, and reinforcing his case by reference to some of his more illustrious family connections, Weld respectfully submitted; 'that in the present state of public opinion, the connection between the mother country and her offshoots is mainly a moral one, and that the union may be advantageously strengthened by affording some opportunity of serving the Empire, to those who have proved throughout their career that they can unite the sympathies and feelings of colonists, with loyalty and devotion to the old country and to Imperial interests'. 27

26. ibid., pp.80-82.
27. Weld to Granville, 19 December 1868, 13988 Patronage, CO 429/1, PRO.
The letter was favourably received. Under-secretary Malcolm Dealtry noted that Weld's statements were substantially correct; Secretary of State Earl Granville was prepared to consider Weld's claims with those of others when a vacancy occurred. And one did, almost immediately. Sir Benjamin Pine, Governor designate for Western Australia, was appointed instead to the Leeward Islands. Weld was offered the post. He accepted. His Letters Patent, Instructions and Commission were prepared in March and April; friends gathered for a valedictory dinner in London in May; the Welds left England days later. It would be fifteen years before they returned.

Forty-six years of age, restored in health, happily married with six children and an income more than adequate to feed and clothe them; a reputation of some standing and a wide social circle: these were all the trappings of security, the manifestation of that success to which most colonisers aspired. Weld could so easily have rested on his considerable achievements and settled comfortably into the life of an English country squire, patron of fêtes, chairman of the local Conservative Club, master of the hunt. Why instead choose a further period of exile in the antipodes?

28. Ibid., Dealtry minute, 22 December 1865, Granville minute, 28 December 1865.

Personal ambition was not the reason. It may have been a secondary factor – few men aspire to obscurity – but the primary force was the conviction which had led Weld to adopt as his motto: 'Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's, thy God's, and truth's.' Weld clearly thought it his duty to go. The encouragement given him to apply for the post, the speed with which he obtained one were alike to be seen as evidence of God's intention that he should go. And he wanted to. Given the challenge of a new position, the chance to apply his own ideas on governing a colony, and that trait of restlessness which made him so frustrated by the prospect of inactivity, the appointment to Western Australia represented a happy coincidence of personal inclination and public duty. It also indicated that Weld had reached a major turning point in his life. Twenty-three years a colonist, he was now to embark on an eighteen year career as a colonial governor. Rarely had a colonist, or a Catholic, been appointed to such a position. How far would his own colonial experiences influence the nature of his administration in other territories? And for how long? For subtly, gradually, but unmistakably, there was a change in Weld's attitudes as the viewpoint of the colonist became that of the officer of empire.