

I understand that there is an impression somewhere that there is a sinister motive somewhere behind the word "conduct" and that it would be removed by substituting the word "care". I protest against any such intention being in existence anywhere.

Nothing will suffer until November, and our action in bringing an amendment will certainly emphasize that we have no such thought of interfering with the well settled principle that the Governor General has the conduct of foreign and imperial relations.⁽¹⁾

(Handwritten)

The next day, Laurier wrote a further letter to Earl Grey:

I have your letter about this unfortunate word "conduct". It so happens that I wrote you yesterday on the same subject.

It would be very awkward to introduce a Bill this session to amend this Bill, though it can be easily done next session, with better grace and more effect.

If you will remember what I said in the Commons that it was not intended by the Bill to give to the Secretary of State, the initiative and control in external affairs, and that in this respect nothing would be changed as to the power of the Governor General.

With this declaration it is not possible for Mr. Ewart or for anyone to draw the inferences which you dread. I would also call your attention to the fact that neither in the House nor in the Senate, was the Bill as drafted found fault with.

I submit these observations with all due respect, awaiting the pleasure of your Excellency.⁽²⁾

(Handwritten)

⁽¹⁾ Grey of Howick Collection. Laurier Vol. 4 Doc. 001184

⁽²⁾ Ibid. Doc. 001188