

15. As a matter of fact, the Hon. the Minister of Education appeared at the wharf at 2.45 on the 11th August, at the time of Gasparini's embarkation. He was attended by his private secretary, his lawyer, and his interpreter, and had a conversation of about fifteen minutes with the extradited prisoner—a conversation to which Inspector Thomson should have put a stop.

16. The Hon. the Minister of Education and his lawyer went so far as to intrust Detective Walker, who was travelling at my expense, with messages for Sydney—messages which could have no object but the raising of new legal difficulties, and preventing, if possible, the final extradition of the convict Gasparini.

17. Such, sir, are the main features of the intervention—personal and public—of the Hon. the Minister of Education in favour of the criminals Cury and Gasparini, and particularly of the last-named.

I have the honour to submit the above-mentioned facts for your Excellency's consideration.

I have, &c.,

JOUFFROY D'ABBANS. *

No. 2.

MEMORANDUM from His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR to the PREMIER.

Extradition Case, Cury and Gasparini.—Respecting Action of Minister of Education.

The Hon. the Premier.

Please furnish me with any remarks that the Hon. the Minister of Education may wish to offer with reference to the statements made in these papers.

13/9/88.

W. F. D. J.

For the Hon. the Minister of Education.—H. A. ATKINSON.

The Hon. the Premier.

My remarks are contained in a separate memo. enclosed.—GEO. FISHER.

29/9/88.

No. 3.

The Hon. the Premier.

I confess I have read the letter of the French Consul with surprise. The accusation that I attempted to defeat the action of the French authorities and the Government of New Zealand in their desire to secure the surrender of the French convicts Cury and Gasparini is a charge of a most serious nature, and I have to say that it is entirely without foundation. Nothing could have been further from my thoughts than the desire to embarrass the action of the French authorities or the New Zealand Government. Such action as I did take was taken as Italian Consul, and every step I took I can justify and explain. I am quite at a loss to see how any act of mine could have caused embarrassment to the authorities.

The regret which the French Consul feels at the so-called "intervention of a Minister of the "Crown" cannot exceed my own regret that he should have assumed that I desired, or in any way furthered, the escape of Gasparini from justice.

I am prepared to prove that the French Consul is mistaken in his assumptions as to my action, and that the grave charges he has made against me are entirely groundless.

I shall be glad to be informed that the French Consul is fully satisfied with this statement, as, unless I am assured of this in writing, I will at once take steps to prove in detail the general statement I have made above.

Wellington, 5th October, 1888.

GEO. FISHER.

No. 4.

Vice-Consulat de France en Nouvelle-Zélande.

Annexe à la lettre du 11 Octobre, 1888.

Le Vice-Consul de France en Nouvelle-Zélande a pris connaissance du memorandum adressé par l'Honorable Ministre de l'Education à l'Honorable Premier Ministre de la colonie, et portant la date du 5 Octobre courant.

Le Vice-Consul saisit cette occasion d'exprimer à ceux des membres du Ministère Neo-Zélandais qui étaient appelés, par la nature de leurs fonctions, à intervenir légitimement dans la question de l'extradition des forçats Cury et Gasparini, sa sincère et reconnaissante appréciation de leur parfaite courtoisie, et de leur concours empressé, énergique et absolument loyal. Il n'a eu qu'à se louer, notamment, des excellents procédés de l'Honorable Premier Ministre, de l'Honorable Attorney-Général, et de l'Honorable Ministre de la Justice.

En ce qui concerne l'Honorable Ministre de l'Education, le Vice-Consul de France lui donne acte de sa déclaration qu'il n'a jamais eu l'intention d'entraver l'œuvre de la justice ni l'action des autorités compétentes. Le Vice-Consul ne met pas en doute la sincérité de l'Honorable Ministre; et il écartera, en conséquence, du débat en ce qui concerne l'Honorable Ministre et son entourage, toute question personnelle et toute allégation d'intention. Il ne retiendra que les faits, ou de notoriété publique, ou dont il a été lui-même (le Vice-Consul) le témoin, ou bien établis par documents, et qui semblent montrer que l'Honorable Ministre de l'Education ne partage pas la manière de voir du Vice-Consul de France en matière d'interprétation de traités, d'usages internationaux et de juridiction consulaire.

Les questions engagées seront, dès lors, principalement d'ordre technique.