

SESS. II.—1891.
NEW ZEALAND.

WEBSTER'S LAND-CLAIMS.

[Continuation of A.—4, Session II., 1887.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,
7th November, 1890.

SIR,—

I beg to enclose copies of a letter from the Colonial Office, covering a note from Mr. Lincoln, United States Minister at this Court, to the Foreign Office, with a printed memorandum on Mr. Webster's land-claims, and of my reply.

The memorandum consists of an elaborate argument against Sir Robert Stout's exhaustive memorandum of 1887, and a claim that Mr. Webster may still come in as an American citizen for compensation under Lord Aberdeen's note to Mr. Everest of 10th February, 1844, this compensation being put down at upwards of £265,000, with interest from 1840.

Though it would hardly have been courteous to decline Lord Knutsford's request to me, I have asked that my reply may be taken as being unofficial. It seems to me that the controversy may now be left between the United States Government and the Foreign Office, until Her Majesty's Government decide whether to admit or deny the interpretation put by the United States on Lord Aberdeen's note of 1844.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 1.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 25th October, 1890.

With reference to the letter from this department of the 2nd December, 1887, and to previous correspondence respecting Mr. W. Webster's claim with regard to certain lands in New Zealand, I am directed by Lord Knutsford to transmit to you a copy of a note received through the Foreign Office from Mr. Lincoln, with its enclosure on the subject.

Lord Knutsford would be glad to be favoured with any observations which you may wish to make on these papers.

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

JOHN BRAMSTON.

Sub-enclosure 1.

Mr. LINCOLN to Lord SALISBURY.

MY LORD,—

United States Legation, London, 11th October, 1890.

Referring to your Lordship's note of the 7th December, 1887, to my predecessor, Mr. Phelps, transmitting copies of a memorandum of Sir Robert Stout, [? Premier] the Governor of New Zealand, on the subject of certain American land-claims in that colony, I have the honour to recall to your Lordship that in that memorandum Sir R. Stout reviews the history of the claims, and makes an extended reply to a report of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate of the United States, who have for some time had the subject under consideration. The Committee were furnished with a copy of that reply, and gave it careful consideration. The result of that consideration is that, on the 11th June last, the Chairman of the Committee, by their direction, advised the President of the adoption by the Committee of the following resolution: "*Resolved*, That the papers in the case of William Webster be transmitted to the President, with the statement that the Committee respectfully recommend this matter to his attention, with the accompanying papers, as a claim that is worthy of consideration, and with the request that it be made the subject of further negotiation with the Government of Great Britain."

I am therefore instructed to acquaint your Lordship that my Government has made the matter the subject of careful examination, with a desire to arrive at a just determination, and finds itself unable, for the reasons which are set forth in a memorandum of which I have the honour to enclose