

36. Have you any idea what part of the evidence before the Commission it was? You said the piece we are referring to now was in reference to one of Mr. Fraser's questions that you first asked the Chairman of the Committee. Mr. Alick McDonald says, "Sir Walter Buller made this statement before the bar of the House," and this piece that you have cut out of Sir Walter's statement was simply to supply that blank?—Yes.

37. You say that you first applied to the Chairman for a copy of the pamphlet to fill in the blank?—I think the Chairman and Sir Walter Buller were the only two who had copies at Levin. When I came back to town I asked the Chairman to find one for me, but he was not able to do so, and I think I subsequently got it from Sir Walter Buller. I got one from somewhere.

38. Was there anything added in a speech of Sir Walter Buller's?—I do not think Sir Walter Buller's evidence has had a single word added to it. In some of his questions I may possibly have had a blank to supply, but, as far as I remember, in the evidence he gave himself there was nothing.

39. Here is a typewritten piece put in after: "Did you ever hear this," &c., and then there is a blank?—Yes; that was filled in.

40. You are positive you told Mr. Otterson these interpolations were to be made?—Yes.

41. And that he discussed it with you, whether it was necessary the alterations should be laid on the table of the House?—He told me any alterations must be laid on the table of the House. I explained the matter to him, and then he said it would not be necessary.

42. These additions were not for the purpose of any vile conspiracy?—I simply made them to make the evidence as clear as possible.

*Mr. Pirani:* I may mention, Mr. Chairman, that I have not spoken or written to Mr. Leslie on this subject at all.

43. *Mr. Hogg.*] Have you ever acted in this capacity as a secretary to a Royal Commission before?—Yes.

44. *Mr. Hogg.*] Has the same process been adopted then?—As far as I was concerned, I had to leave that Commission before it was over.

45. Then, you were not secretary throughout?—No.

46. Then, another secretary had to be appointed?—Yes.

47. You have not had any previous experience as a secretary?—No; not personally.

48. You say the Chairman, Mr. Martin, was aware the report was not quite complete?—He was aware, and instructed me wherever a blank occurred to write in "extract read."

49. Do you think, when he handed this report to the Government, he knew the evidence was not complete?—He knew of all these blanks.

50. You say where there are omissions you had to consult some of the witnesses afterwards to get the proper spelling?—No, not witnesses—those who put questions.

51. You did not look upon these depositions the same as those taken in a Court?—Yes. This evidence was all taken on oath.

52. Supposing, now, evidence is taken in a Court of justice, what would you think of the conduct of one if, after taking the depositions, he had to consult the witnesses?—I do not think the cases are parallel. Royal Commission work is supposed to be very similar to Committee-work of the House. It has always been usual, when you have written out evidence, to send it to the witnesses for revision.

53. That is to save the trouble of reading it over?—No; I do not know exactly why it is done; but it has been the usual custom.

54. Was that course adopted in this case?—No.

55. In a Court of justice the evidence is taken in manuscript slowly; but the evidence of a Royal Commission is taken in shorthand, consequently, as it takes some time to reproduce that evidence by the typewriter, it is considered convenient to allow the witnesses to read it over and, with the permission of the Chairman, to make alterations he considers necessary?—Yes.

56. You are not aware of evidence of this kind having been handed in in an incomplete state, or laid on the table of the House?—If I had had anything to say in the matter it would not have been handed in in an incomplete state.

57. There is no doubt your desire has been to make the evidence intelligible?—Yes; complete.

58. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] You were secretary to this Commission, and handed the report to the Chairman of the Commission, and this is the report that you handed to him [produced]?—Yes.

59. You say, at the time you handed it to Mr. Martin, you told him it was incomplete?—Yes, that is the evidence.

60. I suppose, Mr. Chairman, we will have an opportunity of seeing Mr. Martin?—

*The Chairman:* Yes.

61. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] You say that this is the first time you know of alterations being made in this manner?—It is the first time after laying it on the table; but it is the practice when leaving out things to get them afterwards.

62. When did the Commission finish its work?—The last day evidence was taken was on the 15th May, I think.

63. The evidence was handed into the Chairman, when?—About three weeks afterwards.

64. Of this added matter, was it statements made by the witnesses, or questions?—Questions principally, and Maori names.

65. How many personal interviews had you with Sir Walter Buller over this matter?—Only two, I think. Once I went to him to get a document, and the other time when he came up last Saturday.

66. I understand you asked Mr. Martin for more time to complete the report of the evidence, but that was declined?—I do not know that I absolutely asked Mr. Martin, but I told him I could not get these blanks sent in; I do not know that I absolutely asked him for more time.

67. He might have been led to believe it was complete when handed in?—He knew that it could not be complete.