

1900.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTING DEBATES AND PRINTING COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF THE), IN THE MATTER OF CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO LETTERS WRITTEN BY THE HANSARD CHIEF REPORTER TO THE NEW YORK TIMES, AND PAMPHLETS PUBLISHED BY HIM; TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND PROCEEDINGS.

(HON. MAJOR STEWARD, CHAIRMAN.)

Brought up 17th day of July, 1900, and ordered to be printed.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

TUESDAY, THE 3RD DAY OF JULY, 1900.

Ordered, "That a Committee, consisting of ten members, be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the reporting of debates and to the printing executed by order of this House, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing Returns and Papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members of this House; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Speaker, Mr. Carnecross, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Hornsby, Mr. Lethbridge, Mr. Pirani, Mr. G. W. Russell, Hon. Major Steward, Mr. J. W. Thomson, and the Mover."—(Hon. Mr. HALL-JONES.)

FRIDAY, THE 29TH DAY OF JUNE, 1900.

Ordered, "That Paper numbered 66, Correspondence relative to Letters written by *Hansard* Chief Reporter to the *New York Times*, also Pamphlets, be referred to the Reporting Debates and Printing Committee."—(Rt. Hon. R. J. SEDDON.)

REPORT.

In the matter of the correspondence relative to letters written by the *Hansard* Chief Reporter to the *New York Times*, also pamphlets published by him.

I am directed to report: That this Committee has inquired into the matter referred to in the order of reference of the 29th June, 1900, and finds as follows:—

That Mr. Grey claims that the terms of his appointment of the 11th June, 1896, allow him liberty to take outside work after completion of *Hansard* and session, and that he has acted within the limits of his appointment. He admits cognisance of the report made by this Committee to the House under date the 14th September, 1899, but maintains that he was justified in acting in defiance of that report, by writing and publishing the matter referred to, the Committee report notwithstanding, as he contends that the Committee has no power to vary the terms of his appointment.

That, in the opinion of this Committee, it is no longer possible that Mr. J. Grattan Grey should remain an officer of Parliament, seeing that the report of the Committee of last year has been disregarded, and that Mr. Grey, as the chief of the *Hansard* staff, in his statement before the Committee this morning, refuses to recognise the authority of the Committee; therefore the Committee recommends that the services of Mr. Grey be dispensed with.

17th July, 1900.

WM. J. STEWARD, Chairman.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

TUESDAY, 17TH JULY, 1900.

THE Committee met at 10 a.m., pursuant to notice.

Present—Mr. Carncross, Mr. Fisher, Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones, Mr. Hornsby, Hon. Sir G. M. O'Rorke, Hon. Major Steward (Chairman), Mr. J. W. Thomson.

Paper No. 66 (H.—29), Correspondence relative to Letters written by *Hansard* Chief Reporter to the *New York Times*, also pamphlets, were considered by the Committee.

Mr. Grattan Grey attended and was examined, a shorthand reporter being in attendance to take notes. Mr. Grey then withdrew.

Resolved, That this Committee has inquired into the matter referred to it under the Order of Reference of the 29th June, 1900, and finds as follows:—

That Mr. Grey claims that the terms of his appointment of 11th June, 1896, allow him liberty to take outside work after completion of *Hansard* and session, and that he has acted within the limits of his appointment. He admits cognisance of the report made by this Committee to the House under date 14th of September, 1899, but maintains that he was justified in acting in defiance of that report, by writing and publishing the matter referred to, the Committee report notwithstanding, as he contends that the Committee has no power to vary the terms of his appointment.

That, in the opinion of this Committee, it is no longer possible that Mr. J. Grattan Grey should remain an officer of Parliament, seeing that the report of the Committee of last year has been disregarded, and that Mr. Grey, as chief of the *Hansard* staff, in his statement before the Committee this morning, refuses to recognise the authority of the Committee; therefore the Committee recommends that the services of Mr. Grey be dispensed with.

The Committee then adjourned.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

TUESDAY, 17TH JULY, 1900.—JAMES GRATTAN GREY examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] You are Chief *Hansard* Reporter?—I am.

2. You are aware that the Committee this morning, under direction of the House, are considering certain pamphlets and correspondence purporting to be your pamphlets and correspondence?—Yes.

3. Do you admit that these pamphlets and correspondence have been written by you?—Of course I do.

4. And also the authenticity of the letter addressed to the Premier, which appears in one of these pamphlets?—Yes, that is my letter.

5. You received last year an instruction from this Committee as follows: "That this Committee recommends that in future members of the *Hansard* staff should not actively participate in New Zealand politics by writing articles for publication or otherwise"?—I understand that was embodied in a report presented to the House.

6. You are cognisant of the fact?—I am cognisant that that was reported to the House.

7. Was there not any direct communication to that effect sent to you?—No, there was no direct communication sent to me. In the first place, you will perhaps permit me to point out that that report of the Committee was neither discussed nor adopted by the House; and, in the second place, I cannot believe that the Committee would knowingly ride roughshod through a written contract.

8. *Sir M. O'Rorke.*] Do you refuse to recognise the authority of this Committee as being able to control you with regard to your writings to the Press?—The subject was submitted to the Committee last year; the Committee considered it and took my evidence, and made a report to the House. That report was simply laid before the House, and was neither discussed nor adopted.

9. You do not recognise the authority of the Committee to control your writings to the Press?—I do not think, under my contract, that the Committee would attempt to ride roughshod through the written contract.

10. But do you not think the Committee might have modified the terms of that contract by agreeing to the report of which you are cognisant? I think you have stated that you do not recognise the authority of that report to control you in any way?—Exactly; that is the position I take up.

11. *Mr. Fisher.*] The position has already been put by Sir Maurice O'Rorke; but, so that there may not possibly be any mistake about it, I will repeat the question. I understand, Mr. Grey, that you adhere to the terms of your contract, and ignore the report of the Reporting Debates and Printing Committee of the 14th September, 1899?—I may say that since I joined the Parliamentary—

12. Please answer my question?—A mere “Yes” or “No” would not be an answer to the question. I joined the Parliamentary Reporting Staff nearly twenty-five years ago on the distinct understanding that it should not interfere with the pursuit of my journalistic profession. The pursuit of that profession I have continued from that period to the present time.

13. *Sir M. O'Rorke.*] You joined the *Hansard* staff on that distinct understanding?—Yes; that it was not to interfere with my journalistic profession so long as the duties of my position were performed.

14. *Mr. Fisher.*] I repeat my question, that you still stand by the terms of your contract, and ignore the report of the Committee given in 1899?—I still stand by the terms of my contract, and contend that it would be unwise for me to surrender my legal and equitable rights under that contract.

15. That is your answer?—That is my answer.

16. Then the report of the Committee dated the 14th September, 1899, carries with it no significance whatever to you?—None whatever, so far as the pursuit of my journalistic profession is concerned.

17. *The Chairman.*] That is all we desire to know, unless you wish to make a further statement?—As these pamphlets have been referred to the Committee, I wish to say distinctly that, in a matter of this kind, where my conscience and principles are involved, I do not withdraw one-thousandth part of one inch from the position I have taken up in this matter. With regard to the Transvaal War, and my condemnation of that war, and the sending of the contingents to assist in that war, I do not withdraw one-thousandth part of an inch from the position I have taken up in the pamphlets which have been submitted to the Committee.

18. Do you wish to add anything to that?—Threats of dismissal have been held out to me, but I wish to say that the threat of dismissal has no terrors for me, holding the opinions and convictions that I do.

19. *Sir M. O'Rorke.*] Who could threaten you with dismissal?—Mr. Seddon has threatened me with dismissal.

20. In his letters?—In his communications to the *Dunedin Star*.

21. *Mr. Carncross.*] Mr. Grey has laid before us certain opinions which he holds with regard to the war. We have nothing whatever to do with the war, and, in my opinion, he has a right to hold whatever opinions he likes with regard to it?—I do not wish this inquiry to be put off on a side issue—and an attempt is being made to do that. I am brought here because of my writings upon the Transvaal War. That is the Order of Reference.

22. *Mr. Fisher* (through the Chairman).] Mr. Grey was aware, of course, that the report of the Committee of last year was laid upon the table: Am I right or wrong in assuming that Mr. Grey was aware of the contents of the report at the time?—Oh, yes. I admit a knowledge of the contents of the report; but if the report of a Committee is to ride roughshod through a written contract, then I do not know where it would stop.

