

The Chairman asked the Committee to express an opinion whether this matter was a proper question to be referred to the Committee.

Upon the question being put, it was resolved in the affirmative.

Resolved, That the inquiry be commenced on next Tuesday week.

Resolved, That Messrs. J. A. Jenkins, care of Tayton and Erskine, Wellington, and Mr. Hugh MacNeil, of Dunedin, be summoned to attend.

TUESDAY, 20TH AUGUST, 1895.

Present: Mr. Guinness (Chairman), Mr. G. Hutchison, Mr. Lang, Mr. T. Mackenzie, Mr. McGowan, Mr. Montgomery, Dr. Newman, Hon. Mr. Seddon, Hon. Sir R. Stout, Mr. Tanner, and Hon. Mr. Ward.

In the absence of Mr. Saunders, Mr. Guinness was, on the motion of Mr. G. Hutchison, voted to the chair.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Clerk announced he had written to Mr. Jenkins for a written statement of the charges, but so far had received no reply.

Mr. G. Hutchison handed in a statement containing items of alleged overcharges, and copy of a letter signed by Mr. Jenkins, dated the 10th May, 1895, addressed to Mr. A. W. Gellatly, of Messrs. Briscoe, MacNeil, and Co.

The following attended: Mr. James Hendry Jenkins; Mr. H. J. H. Blow, Under-Secretary for Public Works Department; Mr. Leonard G. Reid, Assistant Crown Law Officer (as counsel for the Crown); Mr. Hugh MacNeil, the younger, of Dunedin; Mr. Alexander W. Gellatly, manager in Wellington for Messrs. Briscoe, MacNeil, and Co.; and Mr. C. P. Skerrett, counsel for Messrs. Briscoe, MacNeil, and Co.

Some discussion ensued as to the procedure of conducting the inquiry.

The witnesses and counsel in attendance were asked to withdraw.

A report from the Under-Secretary, Public Works Department, was read.

After discussion it was resolved, on the motion of Mr. Guinness, That Mr. Jenkins' evidence be taken first, then any statement on behalf of the Public Works Department, and that then Messrs. Briscoe, MacNeil, and Co. be called upon to make their answers or reply.

Also resolved, That Messrs. Briscoe, MacNeil, and Co. be allowed to peruse and make a copy of the statement put in by the Under-Secretary, Public Works Department.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr. G. Hutchison, That copies of the Stores Supply and Delivery Contracts, 1895, be supplied to the members of the Committee.

The witnesses and counsel were then re-admitted, and the above resolutions communicated to them.

Mr. James Hendry Jenkins was sworn and made a statement, which was taken down by the reporter.

Previous to making his statement Mr. Jenkins asked that counsel might appear on his behalf.

The Committee agreed that if at any part of his statement he would prefer an adjournment to procure counsel this would be agreed to.

After the members had examined the witness, and Mr. Skerrett was cross-examining, Mr. Jenkins asked to be allowed to obtain counsel.

The witnesses and counsel again withdrew, and after discussion it was *Resolved*, That Mr. Jenkins be allowed to employ counsel, and that the inquiry be adjourned till to-morrow.

After this had been communicated to those in attendance, the Committee adjourned till to-morrow at 11 o'clock a.m.

WEDNESDAY, 21ST AUGUST, 1895.

Present: Mr. Guinness (Chairman), Mr. G. Hutchison, Mr. Lang, Mr. T. Mackenzie, Mr. McGowan, Mr. Montgomery, Dr. Newman, Mr. Tanner.

In the absence of Mr. Saunders, Mr. Guinness was, on the motion of Mr. Montgomery, voted to the chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed.

The following attended the Committee: Messrs. Reid, Blow, Skerrett, Gellatly, Bruce, MacNeil, Jenkins, and Mr. A. Stuart-Menteath (as counsel for Mr. Jenkins), and Mr. C. Bridson (of Messrs. Briscoe, MacNeil, and Co.).

Some discussion took place as to whether Mr. Skerrett should continue his cross-examination of Mr. Jenkins or if Mr. Menteath should commence *de novo*.

The witnesses retired.

Mr. Hutchison moved, That Mr. Menteath be now allowed to examine Mr. Jenkins.

Mr. Guinness moved by way of amendment, That the examination of Mr. Jenkins be continued at the point where the proceedings left off yesterday.

Upon the amendment being put, a division was called for, and the names were taken down as follow:—

Ayes, 2: Mr. Guinness, Mr. McGowan.

Noes, 5: Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Lang, Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Tanner.

Amendment lost.

Mr. Hutchison's motion was then put, and it passed in the affirmative.