

1898.
NEW ZEALAND.

MR. DISTRICT JUDGE KETTLE

(CORRESPONDENCE WITH) IN THE CASE OF MR. ALBERT BARNES.

Laid on the Table by the Hon. T. Thompson with the leave of the House.

No. 1.

The Hon. the MINISTER of JUSTICE to Mr. District Judge KETTLE.

SIR,—

Department of Justice, Wellington, 21st March, 1898.

Referring to previous correspondence, I have the honour to transmit for your information the accompanying copies of the following documents: namely,—(1.) Letter from the Hon. the Minister of Lands to Mr. Albert Barnes dated the 11th December, 1897. (2.) Letter from Mr. Barnes to the Hon. the Minister of Lands dated the 15th December, 1897. (3.) Letter from the Under-Secretary of Justice to Mr. Barnes dated the 1st March, 1898. (4.) Letter from Mr. Barnes to the Under-Secretary of Justice dated the 15th March, 1898.

Probably, after reading these documents you will not desire that the matter should be carried any further. Should you, however, consider that inquiry is necessary, the Government will be prepared to offer facilities for such an inquiry; but I may say that the Government is quite satisfied that there were no grounds for imputing to you corruption or other breach of your judicial duty in the proceedings relating to Mr. Barnes's bankruptcy.

I have, &c.,

Mr. District Judge Kettle, Wanganui.

T. THOMPSON.

Enclosure No. 1.

The Hon. the MINISTER of LANDS to Mr. A. BARNES.

SIR,—

Office of Minister of Lands, Wellington, 11th December, 1897.

I forward herewith copy of correspondence from District Judge Kettle to the Hon. the Minister of Justice, and I now wish to ask you if you still adhere to the statement made in your explanation which you forwarded to me, and which forms the subject of this correspondence.

I have, &c.,

A. Barnes, Esq., District Land Valuer, Wanganui.

JOHN MCKENZIE.

Enclosure No. 2.

Mr. A. BARNES to the Hon. the MINISTER of LANDS.

SIR,—

Wanganui, 15th December, 1897.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, enclosing copies of correspondence from District Judge Kettle to the Minister of Justice, and requesting to know if I still adhere to the statements made by me in explanation forwarded you some time back.

In reply, I beg to advise you that I have nothing to withdraw from the explanation made by me, which contains absolute facts so far as they are within my knowledge. There is, however, one point which possibly requires amplification. In stating that Judge Kettle was the tool of the Bank of New South Wales, I did not mean to imply personal corruption to Judge Kettle. I was aware that the acting-manager of the Bank of New South Wales here was boarding at Chavannes's Hotel, where Judge Kettle is also a boarder, and was informed that the two had conversations on the subject of my bankruptcy. My own opinion, and that of my friends, was that the manager, who had a strong personal feeling against me, influenced Judge Kettle through these conversations, and that, possibly unconsciously to himself, Judge Kettle became the bank's engine of oppression against me.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. John McKenzie, Minister of Lands, Wellington.

ALBERT BARNES.