

Enclosure No. 3.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, Justice Department, to Mr. A. BARNES.

SIR,—

Department of Justice, Wellington, 1st March, 1898.

Your letter of the 15th December last, addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Lands, has been forwarded to this department, and has received the consideration of the Government.

I am now directed by the Minister of Justice to inquire whether you have anything to add to that letter; and, if not, the Government is of opinion that you were in no way warranted in casting the reflection you did upon District Judge Kettle, and that you should unreservedly withdraw the charges made in your memorandum which was quoted in the House by the Minister of Lands, and express regret for having on such slight grounds based so serious a reflection.

The Government is further of opinion that you should express to the Minister of Lands your regret at having misled him by making a statement which you are unable to substantiate, and which you have now practically, though not in express terms, withdrawn; and also that, from the position you hold as a public officer, it is reprehensible in the highest degree to have written to the Minister in charge of the department as you have done.

I shall be glad to receive your reply at the earliest possible date.

I have, &c.,

F. WALDEGRAVE,

Under-Secretary.

Albert Barnes, Esq., Wellington.

Enclosure No. 4.

Mr. A. BARNES to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Justice Department.

SIR,—

Wellington, 15th March, 1898.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, with respect to my reflections on District Judge Kettle.

When I made them I was suffering under a keen sense of wrong, and honestly believed them to be true. I have, however, since satisfied myself that they were in no way warranted by the facts, and in these circumstances it is my plain duty to make all the reparation in my power. I therefore unreservedly withdraw them, and desire to express my regret that, misled by my own feelings and the advice of my friends, I should ever have made them.

In quoting from my memorandum in the House the Hon. the Minister of Lands did so in good faith, relying on the accuracy of my statements, and was consequently misled. That, however unintentionally, I should have placed him in a false position, is also a matter for which I desire to express my regret. I have already informed him of it.

I feel that, in fairness to Judge Kettle, a copy of this letter should be sent to him by you, and I have accordingly to ask that you will be good enough to do so.

I have, &c.,

ALBERT BARNES.

The Under-Secretary, Department of Justice, Wellington.

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