

1898.
NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF THE) ON THE QUESTION OF ESTABLISHING A PACIFIC-CABLE SERVICE,
TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND APPENDICES.

Report brought up on 30th August, 1898, and ordered to be printed.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

TUESDAY, THE 5TH DAY OF JULY, 1898.

Ordered, "That Standing Order No. 211 be suspended, and that a Committee, consisting of fourteen members, be appointed to examine into and report upon such questions relating to the Public Accounts as they may think desirable, or that may be referred to them by the House or by the Government and also into all matters relating to the finances of the colony which the Government may refer to them; five to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. J. Allen, Mr. Duthie, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Graham, Mr. Guinness, Hon. W. J. M. Larnach, Mr. McLean, Mr. McNab, Mr. Montgomery, Captain Russell, Mr. Tanner, Hon. J. G. Ward, and the mover."—(Rt. Hon. R. J. SEDDON.)

TUESDAY, THE 2ND DAY OF AUGUST, 1898.

Ordered, "That the question of establishing a Pacific-cable service be referred to the Public Accounts Committee."—(Rt. Hon. R. J. SEDDON.)

R E P O R T.

THE Public Accounts Committee, to whom was referred the question of establishing a Pacific-cable service, has the honour to report that, in the opinion of the Committee,—

1. It is desirable that telegraphic communication between England and New Zealand *via* Canada and the Pacific should be established.

2. The Colony of New Zealand should agree to join with such of the Australian Colonies as are prepared to do likewise, upon the basis of a guarantee of four-ninths of the cost of construction and annual deficiency (if any) by such colonies, New Zealand's proportion of the guarantee not to exceed in any case one-eighth of the whole cost.

3. For the purpose of working the cable, it is desirable that a central authority should be empowered, on behalf of the contributing countries, to carry out the laying and working of a cable across the Pacific.

4. The maximum rates for ordinary messages between New Zealand and the United Kingdom should be 3s. per word; for Government messages, 2s. per word; for Press messages, 1s. per word and 6s. per hundred words.

5. The construction, control, and maintenance of the cable should be intrusted to the Canadian Government, upon the understanding that each contributing colony shall have the right to be represented and to vote upon all matters appertaining to policy, acceptance of tenders, or anything material in the management of the cable.

6. The contributing country and colonies should jointly own and control the cable.

7. It is desirable that, with a view of furthering the establishment of a Pacific-cable service, a conference of representatives from the several countries concerned should be held in New Zealand at an early date.

30th August, 1898.

W. J. M. LARNACH, Chairman.