

Attending Mr. Dalziell, when he said he was acting for Mr. H. Lewis, and suggested that he was desirous of giving all facilities to have dispute settled and we should agree to land being sold by Maori Land Board. Conference with him and Attorney-General on matter."

18. Do you know whether you and he came to me at my office in the present Parliamentary Buildings and saw me?—Yes.

19. It has been stated that the recommendation of the Legislative Council in favour of the Government setting up a Commission was before that?—I think it was two or three days before.

20. That is the first occasion upon which you saw me in regard to the Legislative Council's recommendation?—That is my recollection.

21. Do you recollect whether you and Mr. Dalziell suggested that I should advise the Government to set up a Commission?—I might say that with reference to the conversation that took place at that interview my mind is a complete blank. I have no recollection whatever as to what took place. Since Mr. Jones told me I was to be called to give evidence here on this question I have been trying to charge my recollection of what took place at the interview, but I cannot remember anything more than that an interview took place—I believe, at my suggestion.

22. As a matter of fact, you rang me up and asked me to meet you?—I do not remember.

23. At any rate, you remember the interview, and that it was after the recommendation made by the Legislative Council for the Commission?—Yes.

24. When you saw me I suppose you were aware that it was a recommendation to the Government, and that the Government, and not the Attorney-General, had power to set up a Commission?—No doubt.

25. It has been set out right through that I refused to set up a Commission?—In any interview I had with you on the matter it was merely an interview between you and myself. I recognize that Dr. Findlay could not set up a Commission. Of course, it would be an absurdity.

26. It has been alleged by Mr. Jones that I acted in this matter in the interests of my firm and against his interests, in order to promote my personal profit. That is the charge made, I understand. I want to ask you whether, in any conversation with me, or dealing of any kind with me, you found anything to suggest that charge?—Nothing whatever. I told Mr. Jones, when he suggested this line of action of bringing forward this charge against Dr. Findlay, that I should not act for him if he persisted, because the charges were grossly improper, and no man's cause could be advanced by making charges that were unjustifiable. No respectable practitioner would bring charges of this character merely for the purpose of supporting a claim—at any rate, I refused to do it. As far as I am concerned, Dr. Findlay's conduct personally is quite free of blame. That is the conclusion I have come to, and I have no hesitation in saying so in the most straightforward way.

27. In any dealings or interviews you had with me, did I ever make any demands through you upon Mr. Jones?—Certainly not. I may state, in addition, in reference to the position, that in advising Mr. Jones it was perfectly clear to me that an inquiry was useless, that the matter had to be brought to a conclusion—if it was to be brought to a conclusion at all—by an arrangement. Mr. Dalziell and I had very many consultations and a long course of negotiations with reference to the matter from this time onwards. It does not matter to my mind one iota whether Dr. Findlay told me that we could not get a Commission or whether he did not tell me. The Commission, for the purpose of supporting Mr. Jones's case, was not worth that [snap of the fingers], and the only method by which his business could be arranged, as became shortly very evident, was an arrangement between us and the other side; and to further that end, with Mr. Jones's approval, I have only quite recently conducted negotiations with Mr. Dalziell on behalf of Mr. Lewis, the Hon. Mr. Carroll, and Sir Joseph Ward, in order to focus Mr. Jones's affairs so that some finality can be come to. I have here all my diary-entries for the period required. I have had a copy made of them, and can hand them in for the period from the 30th July, 1909, to the 30th November of the same year, and these are certified to by a clerk in my office as the only entries in the matter relating to that period.

28. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] When did you first learn that Messrs. Findlay and Dalziell were acting for Mr. Lewis?—On the 8th October, when Mr. Dalziell called at my office.

29. Now, I just wish to say that I do not wish to make any imputations against Dr. Findlay whatsoever; but are you surprised that a man of Mr. Jones's temperament should have drawn certain conclusions in regard to Dr. Findlay?—I do not see why I should criticize Mr. Jones's character. Mr. Jones is a man I have known for a great many years. He is a man to whose business I have devoted a very large amount of time and attention, which I would not have done had I not thought he had a *bona fide* claim. But I cannot support a proper claim by making improper charges against members of the Government. I told Mr. Jones that there was nothing in them, and that he had no right to make them.

30. You wrote to Mr. Jones telling him that the writer had several times seen the Attorney-General in reference to this matter, and a perfectly plain intimation was given that the Government would not support the petition or investigate the allegations in the petition?—Yes; I say so in that letter. That was the impression on my mind when I wrote that letter—that the Government would not appoint a Commission.

31. Was any impression formed at the time of the interview between yourself, Mr. Dalziell, and Dr. Findlay?—How can I tell you? I saw them several times, but my recollection of what took place has passed entirely from my memory. I do not know whether you have the letter of Mr. Jones of the 24th October to my firm. The two letters should be read together.

*The Chairman:* Yes, we have them.

32. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] Had you any conversation with anybody about the Stout Commission—with Mr. Dalziell—with regard to the barring of these letters?—I dare say I had.