

order of reference enclosed herewith, to ask you to attend the next meeting of the Select Committee, to be held on Wednesday, the 12th October, at half past 10 of the clock in the forenoon, in Committee-room K, Old Parliamentary Buildings, and to fully formulate, in writing or otherwise, the said charges which you made and implied against certain persons not named.

“ I have, &c.,

“ G. F. BOTHAMLEY,

“ Clerk of the Committee.

“ One enclosure.

“ J. B. Hine, Esq., M.P., House of Representatives, Wellington.”

*Mr Graham* Has he had notice that the meeting was not to take place in K room?

*The Clerk* Yes. I waited on Mr Hine last night, and asked him if he minded the room being altered, and he said “ No.”

*The Chairman* The letter I have just read was served on Mr Hine by the Clerk of the Committee, together with a copy of the order of reference therein referred to. (To the Clerk) Is Mr Hine in attendance?

*The Clerk* Yes.

*The Chairman* I presume, gentlemen, we will invite Mr Hine to come in?

Assent given.

Mr Hine having entered the Committee Room,

*The Chairman*: You received a letter from this Committee, Mr Hine, asking you to kindly attend, and fully formulate the charges you referred to in the House, and which are more particularly referred to in the copy of order of reference served upon you?

*Mr Hine* Yes, Mr Hanan.

*The Chairman*: Are you willing to comply with the request, and formulate your charges, as asked by the Committee?

*Mr Hine* I have a previous request to make—that is, with regard to my being represented by counsel. Mr M. Myers, who is acting for me, has all the charges formulated, and they are ready to present to the Committee. Will you consider that matter first? I think it is quite fair and only right that in what I understand to be the highest Court in the land I should be represented by counsel.

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward* I do not think it is usual for a lawyer to be present when charges of this nature are made, but there is no objection on my part so far as Mr Hine is concerned. I think we should have the charges first, because after they are made here—of necessity—the parties concerned should be advised and informed of them; also that Mr Hine is to have counsel, so that they may have an opportunity of having counsel if they so desire when Mr Hine's counsel is here. I do not intend to put obstacles in your way, Mr Hine.

*Mr Massey* I think Mr Hine should be assisted by counsel if he wishes.

*Mr Graham*: Are you prepared to formulate your charges in the event of your getting counsel?

*Mr Hine* Yes, certainly.

*The Chairman*: We asked Mr Hine to attend the Committee and formulate the charges: that was the first step. Then the next question, that of allowing counsel to be present, was to be held over for further consideration. (To Mr Hine): Are you willing now to formulate your charges, and to allow your request for counsel to appear for you to be considered afterwards?

*Mr Hine*: Yes, I gather that from the Committee, and on those lines I am quite prepared to fully formulate my charges.

*The Chairman* Will you fully formulate your charges now?

*Mr Hine*: Yes.

*The Chairman* I understand, gentlemen, that the members of the Press wish to know whether they can be admitted. What do you say to that?

*Mr Allen* What about the formulation of the charges—is that evidence?

*The Chairman*: I do not think so.

*Mr Allen*: Are they to get the charges?

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward* First, Mr Hine has to submit his charges, the first witness is then examined; and the whole of the charges and evidence should be submitted when the Press is present.

*Mr Allen*: I take it that the charges are evidence.

*The Chairman* I think the charges should go forth to the public when fully made.

*Mr Massey* I do not think there should be any secret about the charges.

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward* I move, That the Press be admitted.

Motion agreed to without dissent, and members of Press admitted.

*The Chairman* Will you proceed, Mr Hine?

*Mr Hine* Well, Mr Chairman, I think it would be advisable to read the charges. I will take them in the order as close as possible to the statements I made in the House:

- (1) That Charles Edwin Major, in or about the year 1904, while a member of Parliament, conducted the sale to the Government of a property of Frederick Bayly at Toko, and received from the said Frederick Bayly a commission or sum of money for so doing.
- (2) That Charles Edwin Major and Walter Symes, or one of them, in or about the year 1905, while both members of Parliament, conducted the sale to the Government of a property of Alfred Bayly at Toko, and received from the said Alfred Bayly a commission or sum of money, which the said Charles Edwin Major and Walter Symes divided.