

79 What was the *Settler*?—Well, if you are calling Mr Whitlock he could tell you. I could not. The two papers had different policies.

Stratford, N Z., 7th November, 1910.

DEAR SIR,—

Re *Hine Charges*

I beg to return herewith transcript of my evidence, in which I have made one or two verbal corrections.

One point I should like to make clear, if it is considered important. The names of the two papers which my company bought had been the *Egmont Post* and the *Egmont Settler*. Just before the company purchased, the *Egmont Post* proprietor changed the name of his paper to the *Stratford Evening Post*, and it was under this name that the company continued the paper. The name of the paper was altered in July, but the company did not take over until October

Yours, &c.,

W D ANDERSON.

The Clerk of the Allegations Committee,
House of Representatives, Wellington.

JOSEPH MCCLUGGAGE sworn and examined. (No. 7.)

- 1 *Mr Myers*] What is your occupation and address?—Storekeeper at Whangamomona.
2. You are a director now of the company which owns the *Stratford Evening Post*?—Yes.
3. And you were in 1905?—Yes.
4. Do you remember receiving this letter which has already been put in [Exhibit Y]?—Yes, I remember receiving that.
5. You were a director then?—Yes.
6. And we have been told that there was an election coming off shortly afterwards?—Yes.
7. But at the time you received that letter Mr Symes was in Wellington, apparently?—Yes.
8. Was he then attending his parliamentary duties?—As far as I know
9. The House was still sitting?—Yes.
10. And there is no doubt he was a member of the House at that time?—Yes.
11. The writs would not have been issued for some time afterwards?
- Right Hon. Sir J G Ward*: No, not for some time afterwards.
12. *Mr Myers*] Did you know Mr Symes well?—Yes.
13. Were you supporting him, as a matter of fact, in that election?—Yes.
14. That letter was in answer to one that you had sent to Mr Symes?—That is so.
15. Have you a copy of it?—No, I have not a copy
16. Did you keep a copy?—No.
17. Can you remember the nature of the letter?—No, I cannot.
18. Can you not give us any idea of its contents?—No. Probably I wrote him about getting the paper on the advertising list.
19. You must know that because the reply refers to it?—Yes.
20. *The Chairman*.] Where did you write it?—I did not write it from my business office, but from my private house in Stratford, so I never had a letter-book there, and did not keep a copy
21. *Mr Myers*.] The reply was kept as a record of the paper?—That letter was a private letter to myself. I gave it to the secretary to show to the editor
22. It was a private letter to you, but was brought before the board?—No.
23. Was it shown to the directors?—No, I gave it to the secretary to show to Mr Copping, the editor
24. Was it shown to Mr Anderson and the other directors?—It was afterwards.
25. *Right Hon. Sir J G Ward*.] By you?—No.
26. *Mr Myers*] You had written a letter to which this is a reply. How did you come to write that letter?—I may have been writing for information as well, and mentioned this particular business, or it may have been only on that particular business.
27. You were in communication with Mr Symes at the time?—Yes.
28. About election matters?—Probably
29. Did you receive any other letters from Mr Symes on the same subject?—No.
- Mr Skerrett*. No questions.
30. *Right Hon. Sir J G Ward*.] Mr McCluggage, did you at any time, as a result of the communication from Mr Symes in that letter of the 4th October, write to the Government or ask the Government to put this *Stratford Evening Post* upon the Government advertising list?—No.
31. Did you make any personal representation in that direction?—No.
32. Did you make any representation to anybody in Wellington independent of the Government?—No. We did it through the office—through the head of the Department, Mr Pollen
33. Officially through the Department?—Yes.
34. But you made no representations to myself or to any other member of the Government about getting that paper put on the advertising list?—No.
35. *Hon. Mr Millar*.] Did I understand you to say that you only gave that letter as a sort of semi-private letter to the editor for him alone?—Yes.
36. Well, how does it happen to belong to the country now?—It would be very interesting to know. Mr Hemingway, the Town Clerk and secretary to Mr Hine's committee, had it in Stratford, and read it out at a public meeting in Stratford. Although it was a private letter to me, he did not ask me anything about it.
37. That letter does not belong to the newspaper company at all?—No, it is a private letter to myself. I do not know how they got hold of it.
38. Who got hold of it?—Mr Hemingway, Mr Hine's secretary
39. Although it was marked "Private" in the corner?—Yes.