

50. Who did Malone, Anderson, and Johnston represent? Did they represent your brother?—I could not tell you.

51. They are a firm of solicitors at Stratford?—Yes.

52. Well, it is quite evident from the bank-book that the amount of £21,026 15s. 6d. was paid in by Malone on the 11th October?—Yes.

53. So far as you know, that was the full amount of the purchase-money for the estate?—Yes, so far as I know.

54. *Mr Fraser* ] Was that payment made through a firm or paid direct by the Government?—Through a firm of lawyers at Stratford.

55. Were those lawyers acting for your brother?—I do not know whether they were.

*Mr Skerrett*: I understood the arrangement was that Mr Major was now to give evidence.

*The Chairman*: Mr Major was to have the first opportunity. Have you closed your case, Mr Myers?

*Mr Myers*: No, I call Mr Symes.

*Mr. Skerrett*: I object to Mr Symes being called till the case is concluded.

*The Chairman*: Is Mr Symes being called as a witness against Mr Major in respect of charge No. 1?

*Mr Myers*: No; we are dealing with charges Nos. 1 and 2.

*The Chairman*: I think I asked you whether you were going to deal with the charges together.

*Mr Myers*: And I said Yes. I call Mr Symes.

*Mr Skerrett*: I object to Mr Symes being called, because the arrangement made was that Mr Major's case should be proceeded with this morning, and I object also to Mr Symes being called until the whole of the evidence against him is concluded, and then I propose to call him myself. That is the ordinary course of procedure.

*Mr Myers*: If my friend says he is going to call Mr Symes, I am quite satisfied.

*The Chairman*: That settles the matter.

*The Chairman* (to Mr Major): You have heard the evidence given: if you wish to make any statement or give evidence you may do so.

*Mr Major*: I wish to discover what I have been guilty of.

*The Chairman*: Do you desire to give evidence?

*Mr. Major*: Yes, directly I know what the charge is.

*The Chairman*: I will read it. The charge which is made by the member for Stratford, Mr Hine, is as follows: “(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.” In the other charge you are coupled with Mr Symes as follows: “(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.”

*Mr Major*: I propose to say what my knowledge is of the transactions.

*The Chairman*: Do you want to give evidence on oath?

*Mr Major*: Yes, I want to give evidence.

CHARLES EDWIN MAJOR sworn and examined. (No. 14.)

1. *The Chairman*.] What are you?—A land agent.

2. Where do you reside?—In Auckland.

3. You were a member of the House of Representatives for some time?—Yes.

4. When were you first elected?—From 1902 to 1908, I think.

5. You were a member of the House during that time?—Yes.

6. You are not a member of the House now?—No.

7. You stood for election as a candidate at the last election?—Yes.

8. And were not returned?—No.

9. Who was your opponent?—Mr Pearce, the member for Patea.

10. Now I think you had better make your own statement?—Perhaps, Mr Chairman, it would be better to deal with the second charge first, so that I might answer in a few words. The only concern I had with that matter was at the instance of Mr Arndt, who initiated the proposals for the purchase of Mr Alfred Bayly's estate. He came to me and said, “You know this place well”—for the reason that I had land at Toko myself—“you know its value, and you know the advantage it will be to a great number of people there. Will you write a letter to the Premier for me telling him that is your opinion of it?” To which I replied, “If I can help you in any way, Harry, I will.” I had no interest in it at that time, nor have I since, and I got no commission. The first I heard of any commission being paid, if it has been paid, is at this moment. That is all the concern I had with the transaction so far as Mr Alfred Bayly was concerned. I knew him well—he was a personal friend of mine.

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward*: Would it not be a matter of convenience, Mr Chairman, to clear that matter up first, and get it out of the road?

11. *The Chairman*.] Yes?—I have nothing further to say in regard to charge 2. If there is any question which occurs to the mind of the Committee or to counsel for Mr Symes or counsel for Mr Hine, I will be quite ready to answer any questions.

12. *Mr Myers* ] When did Mr Arndt die—about when?—Well, he died during the time Parliament was sitting, but the year he died I could not exactly say. I have my ledger here, which would give an indication.