

met Mr Hutchison yesterday—he had just landed in New Zealand. I quite agree with you it will be quite useless Mr Hutchison taking any steps on his own account, in fact, in my opinion he will do well to keep out of it until the vote is passed by the House. I have never lost sight of the matter, neither do I intend doing so, and everything that can be done up to the present has been carefully attended to. I hope shortly to be in a position to advise you definitely.—Yours truly, WALTER SYMES ” Would you show me the letter you wrote to Mr Symes on the 5th November?—I have a copy of it here. [Letter, Exhibit P, handed in.]

51 Your letter to Mr Symes reads, “Acme Chambers, 5 Swanson Street, 5th November, 1907.—Walter Symes, Esq, M.H.R., House of Representatives, Wellington.—DEAR SIR,—West coast settlement reserves; G. Hutchison’s claim Referring to my letter of 9th September, and your reply, I learn that Mr Hutchison is now back in New Zealand and is at present in Wellington. As I mentioned to you before, I have Mr Hutchison’s order to collect the money, most of which, if obtained, is earmarked to myself I do not know whether Mr H. is inclined to take any steps himself, but my own opinion is that it will be better left with you. What do you think? I am writing to him to-night, and I will mention the matter Please note that the money is payable to me in the first instance.—Yours truly, J G HADDOW ” What did you mean by that?—I had not full confidence in Mr Hutchison’s methods of going about it. I thought he might cause delay, and he was too strenuous.

52. Any other reason?—No.

53. Well, look at the letter to Mr Hutchison on the 15th November, 1907?—I do not know that I have a copy of that.

54. I want to find out if there are any letters from Mr Symes to you, or from you to him, for that matter, with regard to political matters in connection with this matter?—No, there is no mention of any political matter as far as I can remember except, of course, there might have been mention of political matters so far as Mr Hutchison was concerned.

55 In the correspondence between you and Mr Symes?—I could not say for certain, but I certainly referred to politics in a letter to Mr Hutchison, that his interference would not help.

56. Have you any letter from Mr Symes of that nature?—Only the one I have put in.

57 *Mr Sherrett.*] I understand, Mr Haddow, that at the time of your first letter to Mr Symes, which is dated 3rd May, 1907, Mr Hutchison had received a favourable recommendation of Parliament in regard to his claim?—Yes. I have a communication from the Clerk of the House, dated 29th October, 1906, stating, “Referred to the Government for favourable consideration.” [Exhibit Q handed in.]

58. Did that cover both claims?—Yes, it covered the whole petition, and the petition asked for both, if I remember correctly

59. Then Mr Hutchison had in his favour the recommendation of Parliament in respect of both those items of claim?—Yes.

60. You regarded it as a mere matter of collecting the amount?—I thought it only wanted some one to go and get it.

61. And your letter of the 3rd May, 1907, was a business communication to Mr Symes?—Yes.

62. It was you who suggested a commission?—It was Mr Hutchison who instructed me to pay the commission, and the offer of it went to Mr Symes through me.

63. And the suggestion of the commission came from Auckland, and not from Wellington?—Yes, through myself

64. I may take it that neither Mr Hutchison nor yourself thought you were doing anything wrong in paying a commission for Mr Symes’s services for getting this money from the Treasury?—I do not know what was in Mr Hutchison’s mind, but I had not any such idea in my mind.

65 Mr Durie appears to have claimed half as his property and half the amount?—Yes.

66. And took steps to intercept the amount?—Yes; steps had been taken before I came into it.

67 The Government only paid the £134 17s., and disregarded the recommendation of the Committee as to the other item of £125?—Precisely

68. So what Mr Hutchison was paid was only what the other lessees were paid who were in similar positions?—Yes. I should say perhaps, that when this first offer was made I was instructed that the other lessees had already been paid, and it seemed to me a mere matter of form.

69 The circumstance that Parliament would have to vote the amount on the estimates was purely formal?—I did not know that at the time it still had to be voted.

70. If they had to, that would be purely formal in regard to the £134 17s.?—Yes.

71 How did you pay Mr Symes—did he send you an account?—No.

72. You simply forwarded the 5 per cent.—the agreed amount?—I simply forwarded him a cheque, and did not wait for any account.

73. And it was received by Mr Symes without objection?—Yes.

74. *Right Hon. Sir J G Ward.*] I understood you to say that you held no power of attorney from Mr Hutchison?—Yes, I held none.

75. And the petition presented in 1906 is signed “G Hutchison”?—Yes.

76. Do you say you had power to receive money for him and give a legal discharge for it in the absence of a power of attorney?—No. What Mr Hutchison left with me was a blank receipt for the money, stamped and signed by Mr Hutchison. That was not used, because the Government asked for a voucher signed by Mr Hutchison in the ordinary way, which I sent to them.

77 Were you in a position to send a voucher signed in the ordinary way before Mr Hutchison returned to New Zealand?—No, I had a blank receipt which I could have forwarded. The receipt says, “Received from His Majesty’s Government the sum of , being