

109. You had nothing to do with the offer of the £40 if the two sums were recovered?—I agreed to that in my letter as Mr Hutchison's agent. I thought the other amount would not be paid, and I was only offering 5 per cent. on the amount collected.

110. How did you expect Mr Symes to earn the £40, or, rather, the £33 5s., for the additional payment of £125?—That was what I saw Mr Muldrock about when I received the letter that there would be a great deal of trouble, and he was of opinion that the trouble would be in connection with the adverse claimants. Mr Muldrock also said that Mr Symes knew all about the matter, and I myself was entirely in the dark.

111. Did you understand that if you had to pay the money at all you would have to pay it because of the political influence that Mr. Symes could bring to bear upon the Government?—No; political influence was not mentioned. I could not help but think later, when I got that letter, that there might be something of the sort. I did not know whether it was the adverse claims that were to be the trouble.

112. *Mr Allen.*] Can you give us the date of the favourable recommendation of the Committee?—I think, 26th October, 1906.

113. I understood you to say that you made application to the Government for payment of the amount?—I was in correspondence with the Government off and on all the time, but my correspondence mostly related to the adverse claims, as far as I remember.

114. When did you make application to the Government for payment of the money?—Almost as soon as Mr Hutchison left—I think in April. He left me a draft letter to write them in April, 1907.

115. Have you got a copy of the application?—Yes, I think so. It is a draft letter by Mr Hutchison, slightly amended by myself. It states, 'Auckland, April 6th, 1907.—The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.—SIR,—We beg to inform you that Mr Hutchison left Auckland for London on Saturday last on business. Before leaving he desired us to ask that you would be good enough to communicate with us on the subject-matter of his petition which the Public Petitions Committee last session referred to the favourable consideration of the Government. We hope soon to hear the decision of the Cabinet, as referred to in your letter to Mr Hutchison of the 19th February. We hold Mr Hutchison's authority to receive and give a full discharge for all moneys paid.—We have the honour to be, &c., HUTCHISON AND HADDOW.'

116. Did you receive any reply to that?—Yes, there was a formal answer to that as follows [Exhibit T]: "Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 9th April, 1907.—GENTLEMEN,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, asking that any communications upon the subject of Mr G. Hutchison's claim for a refund under the West Coast Settlement Reserves Act may be addressed to you, as you hold Mr Hutchison's authority to receive moneys.—I have the honour to be, gentlemen, Your most obedient servant, (Signed) HUGH POLLEN.—Messrs. Hutchison and Haddow, Barristers and Solicitors, 102 Victoria Arcade, Auckland.'

117. Had you at that time had any communication with Mr Symes about collecting the money?—No.

118. How long after had you?—I think my letter to Mr. Symes was 3rd May, 1907.

119. Did you make any further application after that letter from Mr Pollen?—Yes, I sent reminders constantly, on and off, through the whole time. After December this letter of Skerrett and Wylie's which was written to the Government was always the difficulty in the way.

120. What made you give up making application to the Government, and obtain some other source for getting it?—I was just acting on my instructions.

121. When did you get those instructions?—Before Mr Hutchison went away. He suggested I should write that letter to the Government, and if I did not get the money I was to get an agent to get it.

122. Did he instruct you to get it yourself?—Yes.

123. And then if you could not get it you were to get the services of an agent?—Yes, if I did not succeed I was to get Mr Symes to collect it.

124. *Mr Myers*] You said, Mr Haddow, to Mr Skerrett that you did not know what was in Mr Hutchison's mind as to the propriety of this payment?—I think Mr Skerrett said, at the time I wrote the letter of the 3rd May.

125. Well, did you after that hold any view as to the propriety of the payment?—Yes.

126. What view did you hold?—I did not think it was an advisable payment to make, but, as a promise had been made, I felt bound to keep it. I think, if I had not taken up that position it would probably never have been heard of.

127. What?—The trouble.

128. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] After you had received the communication from Mr Symes suggesting a payment by your firm, did you at any time communicate with the Government, and inform them that Mr Symes was receiving a payment for services he was rendering?—No.

129. Or to any one in any of the Departments?—No, to nobody.

130. *Mr Skerrett.*] Supposing you had a partner who was a member of Parliament, do you think there is any objection to that firm undertaking a claim against the New Zealand Government?—Well, that is a very difficult question.

131. I am putting it to you—I want your opinion upon it. Is there any objection to a firm in which one member of the firm is a member of Parliament undertaking business against the New Zealand Government? You know it has been done over and over again by people of very high repute?—Yes.

132. Do you think it is improper?—In view of the difficulty that may arise and that has arisen from this sort of thing, I think it would be wise not to do it.

—133. Of your own knowledge you know of many barristers who are members of Parliament and whose firms have undertaken business against the Government?—And it was that idea I had in my own mind when this offer was made.