

REPORT

OF

THE SELECT COMMITTEE

ON THE QUESTION OF BUILDING

MINISTERIAL RESIDENCES.

REPORT BROUGHT UP 29TH AUGUST, 1865, AND ORDERED TO BE PRINTED WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

WELLINGTON.

—
1865.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives, Tuesday, the 1st day of August, 1865.

ORDERED, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire and report upon the advisability of providing or maintaining Residences for Ministers, and to make recommendation as to what amount of rent, if any, shall be and is chargeable against Ministers occupying such residences, with power to call for persons and papers ; such Committee to consist of Mr. Stafford, Mr. Curtis, Dr. Featherston, Mr. R. Graham, Mr. FitzGerald, Mr. Cox, and the Hon. Mr. Weld.

(True extract.)

F. E. CAMPBELL,
Clerk House of Representatives.

REPORT.

THE COMMITTEE appointed to inquire into and report upon the advisability of providing or maintaining Residences for Ministers, and to make recommendations as to what amount of rent, if any, shall be and is chargeable against Ministers occupying such residences, having considered the questions referred to it, has the honor to report—

1st. That in the opinion of the Committee it is not advisable that the Colony should undertake, under any circumstances, to erect buildings as residences for Ministers.

2nd. That admitting the possibility of some persons being deterred from taking Office owing to the difficulty of their obtaining suitable residences, the Committee is of opinion that it would be desirable that the Government should at once provide residences at the Seat of Government for Ministers who may not previously have resided there, and who, on taking office, have been obliged to change their place of residence, for a term not exceeding five years, at the expiration of which time it may reasonably be expected that no difficulty of obtaining residences will be experienced.

3rd. That it is the opinion of the Committee that Ministers should not be called upon to pay, out of their present salaries, any rent for the occupation of such residences, or be charged with the costs of their repairs.

4th. And further, that in its opinion no rent should be charged for the house that has already been purchased, and is now occupied by the Premier.

ALFRED COX,
Chairman.

29th August, 1865.

MINISTERIAL RESIDENCES COMMITTEE.

SATURDAY, 12TH AUGUST, 1865.

Committee met pursuant to notice.

Present—Mr. Stafford, Mr. Cox, Mr. R. Graham, Mr. FitzGerald, the Hon. Mr. Weld, and Mr. Curtis.

The Order of Reference of the 1st of August read.

On motion of Mr. R. Graham, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Weld, *Resolved*, That Mr. Cox do take the Chair.

Mr. Stafford moved, That the Clerk do write to the Hon. Mr. Fitzherbert, requesting him to attend the Committee on Wednesday next, to give evidence before the Committee, especially with reference to any liabilities incurred by the General Government on account of any such residences.

The Committee then adjourned until Wednesday, the 16th instant, at 11 o'clock a.m.

WEDNESDAY, 16TH AUGUST, 1865.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

Present—Mr. Cox, Mr. R. Graham, and Mr. Curtis.

The Minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.

The Hon. Mr. Fitzherbert not being in attendance, *Resolved*, That the Clerk request Mr. Fitzherbert to attend the Committee to-morrow to give evidence.

The Committee then adjourned until to-morrow at 10 o'clock.

THURSDAY, 17TH AUGUST, 1865.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

Present—Mr. Cox, Mr. Curtis, and Mr. R. Graham.

The Minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Cox laid before the Committee a statement from the Hon. Mr. Fitzherbert, the Colonial Treasurer of the cost of house and furniture purchased for the Hon. the Premier with all other expenses paid on account of the same.

STATEMENT of the cost of House and Furniture purchased for the Honourable the Premier, with all other Expenses paid on account of the same.

	£	s.	d.	
Cost of House and Land* - - - -	2,900	0	0	Paid in Treasury Bills bearing interest at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum: one moiety (£1,450) at one year's date, due 28th March, 1866, and the other moiety at two year's date, due 28th March, 1867.
Cost of furniture taken with the House, including cost of valuation - - - -	387	14	0	
Cost of repairs, additions, and alterations - -	158	2	11	} Paid in cash.
	3,445	16	11	

* The Land measures 2 acres 1 rood and 24 perches.

J. WOODWARD, Assistant Treasurer.

Treasury, Wellington, 16th August, 1865.

The first Question considered by the Committee was as to the advisability of erecting buildings as residences for Ministers. On motion of Mr. R. Graham, *Resolved*—

1. That in the opinion of the Committee it is not advisable that the Colony should undertake, under any circumstances, to build residences for Ministers.

Upon the Question of providing and maintaining residences for Ministers, Mr Curtis moved, and the Question was proposed—

2. That admitting the possibility of qualified men being discouraged from taking office from the difficulty of their at once obtaining suitable residences at the Seat of Government, it is the opinion of this Committee that it would be desirable that the Government should at once provide residences for Ministers by the renting of houses for a term not exceeding five years, at the expiration of which term it may reasonably be expected that no difficulty of obtaining suitable and sufficient accommodation by Ministers will be experienced; and that it is the opinion of the Committee that, out of their present salaries and allowances, Ministers should not be called upon to pay any rent for the occupation or repairs of such residences.

And further, that in the opinion of the Committee no rent should be charged for the occupancy of the house which has already been purchased, and is now occupied by the Hon. the Premier, Mr. Weld.

Upon the above motion being put, the following Amendment was moved by Mr. R. Graham:—

That this Committee is of opinion, that in voting salaries for Ministers the difficulty of obtaining suitable house accommodation should be taken into consideration.

And the motion being put, it passed in the Negative.

Then the original Resolution was put and carried.

The Committee then adjourned until Wednesday, the 23rd instant.

WEDNESDAY, 23RD AUGUST, 1865.

Present—Mr. Cox, Mr. Curtis, and Mr. R. Graham.

The Minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.

The report of the Committee embodying the Resolutions of last meeting was read, and upon the question of its adoption being put, on Motion of Mr. R. Graham, *Resolved*, that the Committee adjourn till to-morrow at 11 o'clock. The Clerk being instructed to summons the Committee with especial reference to the consideration of the Report.

THURSDAY, 24TH AUGUST, 1865.

Present—Mr. Cox, Mr. Stafford, and Mr. Curtis.

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

On Motion of Mr. Stafford, *Ordered*, that Resolution 2 adopted on the 17th August, be amended as follows, that in the second line, instead of the words "qualified men," the words "some persons" be substituted; also that after the word "Ministers," the words "who may not have previously resided there, and who on taking office have been obliged to change their place of residence" be added.

The Resolution as amended was adopted.

On motion of Mr. Curtis, *Ordered*—That a Report, embracing the Resolutions passed by the Committee, be presented to the House by the Chairman.

The Committee then adjourned *sine die*.