

REPORT OF THE PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE.

Your Committee appointed to inquire into the allegations contained in the report of the meeting of the Waste Lands Board of the Province of Wellington, held on Monday, the 26th day of August, and which appears in the *Evening Post* of the same date,* have the honor to report to the House the following Resolution, at which they arrived without any dissentient voice :—

“That the evidence given before the Committee, goes to prove that Mr. John Martin has been heard to say, that he had made application for a block of land on Mr. Andrew’s run, and in doing so intended to make Mr. Andrew pay for a vote which he had given in the House of Representatives last Session.”

Your Committee have not examined Mr. Martin, nor any one on his behalf; they conceived it to be the wish of the House that they should ascertain whether there was any sufficient foundation for the paragraph in the *Evening Post*. Having reported to the House that in their opinion there is sufficient ground for the statement made in that article, they presume that further proceedings, if it should be deemed proper to take any, will be directed by the House itself.

Your Committee think that they will not be exceeding the limits of the duty assigned to them, in reporting that the act complained of appears to them to be very distinctly a breach of privilege.

Threats levelled at individual Members have always been regarded as insults to the Legislature as a whole, and calculated to impair its independence and freedom of action.

Although not in the opinion of your Committee the principal question referred to them, your Committee think that it is right that they should report that the examination of the Commissioner of Crown Lands of the Province of Wellington has disclosed the fact that, in the event of simultaneous applications for pastoral land, there is no provision for determining which of the applicants is to be considered as entitled to priority.

Your Committee would further report, that, in their view of the matter, it would be no more than just and right that Mr. Andrew should be protected from the injury with which he has been threatened.

D. MONRO,
Chairman.

3rd September, 1872.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

THURSDAY, 29TH AUGUST, 1872

Mr. JOHN C. ANDREW in attendance, and examined.

Mr. Andrew.
29th August, 1872.

1. *The Chairman.*] The Committee is desirous of knowing what evidence can be given in support of an article in the *Evening Post*, read before the Committee, in which you are alleged to have stated, at a meeting of the Waste Lands Board, Wellington, that certain lands for which you had made application were applied for also by Mr. Martin, with the view of inflicting a punishment or penalty in consequence of your having, in the discharge of your duty as a Member of the House of Representatives, given your vote in a particular direction. The Committee are desirous of knowing what evidence you suppose can be brought forward to prove that fact.—In the month of April last, or thereabouts, in the course of conversation on other business, I learned from Mr. Levin that Mr. Martin had stated publicly that he would take care to punish me by putting up the land I held under pastoral license. I am not certain that Mr. Levin’s memory is quite exact as to the words made use of. Similar statements were made to Mr. Richard Collins, of Te Ori Ori, and to the Hon. Mr. Pharazyn, a Member of the other House. These statements were to the effect that he (Mr. Martin) would punish me by making me pay for my vote £500. This statement was made on the Beach, on the 12th day of August.

2. In reply to a further question, the witness said :—That vote to which the punishment alludes is a vote given by me in the House on the 17th November last, in respect of certain claims put before the House by Mr. Martin. On that occasion I voted according to my conscience, and, in doing so, I opposed Mr. Martin’s claims. I considered in doing so I was consulting the interests of the country.

3. *Mr. Reynolds.*] Then how many persons have you got to prove these statements do you say?—Mr. William Levin, merchant, Wellington; Mr. Richard Collins; and the Hon. Mr. Pharazyn, a Member of the Upper House.

* Extract from *Evening Post* referred to :—He (Mr. Andrew) stated, and was prepared to produce evidence, if required, that Mr. Martin had publicly avowed that “his motive in applying for the land was to punish Mr. Andrew for a vote given last session of the General Assembly; that it was the only way he could get at him, and it should cost him 500 notes.”