

1875.

## NEW ZEALAND.

## DISQUALIFICATION ACT INFRINGEMENT COMMITTEE.

(REPORT OF, TOGETHER WITH APPENDIX.)

*Report brought up, and ordered to be printed, 29th September, 1875.*

## ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

*Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.*

WEDNESDAY, THE 1ST DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1875.

*Resolved*, That, allegations having been made, and returns and papers having been laid on the Table, showing apparently that Members of the Legislature, during the term of the present Parliament, have been or are interested in agreements or transactions with the Executive Government, it is expedient that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the circumstances under which the same have been entered into, and as to whether the provisions of the Disqualifications Act have been thereby infringed. Such Committee to have power to call for persons and papers, and to report within one month.—(*Mr. Rolleston.*)

THURSDAY, THE 2ND DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1875.

*Ordered*, That the Select Committee on alleged breaches of the Disqualification Act consist of the Hon. Major Atkinson, Mr. G. B. Parker, Mr. Stout, Mr. Johnston, Sir G. Grey, Mr. Curtis, and Mr. Rolleston.—(*Mr. Rolleston.*)

FRIDAY, THE 3RD DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1875.

*Ordered*, That the quorum of the Committee on the alleged breaches of the Disqualification Act be fixed at five.—(*Mr. Rolleston.*)

THURSDAY, THE 9TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1875.

*Ordered*, That the Select Committee appointed to consider certain questions referred to it, with reference to infringement of the Disqualification Act, have power to communicate from time to time with the Committee on the same subject appointed by the Legislative Council.

THE Committee appointed to inquire into and report upon the circumstances under which agreements or transactions have been entered into between Members of the Legislature and the Executive Government during the term of the present Parliament, and as to whether the provisions of the Disqualification Act have been thereby infringed, have the honor to report that they have had under consideration the following transactions, in which it has been alleged that Members of the Legislature have, during the term of the present Parliament, been concerned in contracts or agreements with the Executive Government:—

- (1.) The proposed purchase from the Government of the Piako-Waikato swamp by Mr. Thomas Russell on behalf of a number of capitalists, in which the Hon. Mr. Taylor is said to have been interested.
- (2.) The purchase from the Government of the Oroua block by Mr. Douglas and others, of whom the Hon. Mr. Campbell is said to be one.
- (3.) The agreement with regard to the Murimotu block, as detailed in Parliamentary Papers, C. No. 6, page 2, in which Mr. John Studholme is said to be concerned.
- (4.) The purchase by the Government, from Mr. W. T. Buckland, Member for Franklin District, of his interest in certain lands in the Waikato District.

In the consideration of these questions they have had before them the original documents relating to the several transactions, and also the evidence taken with regard to them before a similar Committee of the Legislative Council.

The proposed sale of the Piako-Waikato swamp to Mr. T. Russell, acting on behalf of a number of capitalists, is not authorized by any existing regulations under the New Zealand Settlements Acts.

The law provides that all lands taken under the authority of "The New Zealand Settlements Act, 1863," and "The New Zealand Settlements Amendment and Continuance Act, 1865," or either of them, and sold or disposed of under the authority of the said first recited Act, shall be sold or disposed of under regulations to be made by the Governor in Council, which regulations shall be published in the *New Zealand Gazette*.

Under existing regulations all lands must be sold by auction, and previously surveyed.

Notice has also to be given of every intended sale for a least one month previously.

It does not appear that these conditions have been complied with. It has been stated in evidence that this land had been open for purchase for seven or eight years, but the Committee