

1891.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE LATE PROPERTY-TAX COMMISSIONER

(MR. SPERREY).

(LETTER FROM THE HON. THE PREMIER TO MR. GILBERT MAIR.)

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated 28th January, 1891.

Ordered, "That a copy of a letter written by the late Premier, and addressed to Mr. Gilbert Mair, on the 10th December last, and afterwards published in the New Zealand newspapers on the 6th January, be laid before this House."—(MR. R. THOMPSON.)

The Hon. the PREMIER to MR. GILBERT MAIR.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 10th December, 1890.

I must apologize for leaving your letter of the 10th October so long unanswered, but I have been waiting to consult with the Attorney-General on the subject as to whether any, and, if so, what, action should be taken by the Government in regard to the charges made against the late Mr. Sperrey.

I had however seen the Solicitor-General and I have seen the Attorney-General on the subject of the desire expressed by Mrs. Mair that an inquiry should be held into the charges made against her late father by Mr. Thompson, of Marsden. I had also had conversations with Mr. Sperrey prior to his death on the subject of these charges, and I had told him the Government had always felt the utmost confidence in him, and placed no faith whatever in the shameful and ridiculous charges made against him, but that I considered he would get no real satisfaction from a Royal Commission inquiring into the matter, for that people who could believe such shameful statements as those made would be bad enough still to believe them whatever a Royal Commission might report.

Those who knew Mr. Sperrey had every confidence in his integrity and sterling uprightness, and would not be influenced by any such statements as those made against him.

The Government have the deepest sympathy with Mrs. Mair in her feelings for her father's memory, and thoroughly appreciate her desire that his honour should be upheld, and his name freed from such imputations as have been made; but I sincerely trust that Mrs. Mair will agree with me that an inquiry at the present stage would be practically useless, and that the assurance which I now give her, in the name of the Government, of their absolute disbelief in any of the accusations made against her father, and of the complete confidence they had in his administration of his department, as well as their respect for himself personally, will be sufficient to remove any feelings which the gross attack upon Mr. Sperrey may have temporarily raised.

I have, &c.,

H. A. ATKINSON.

Gilbert Mair, Esq.

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