

1893.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# REPORT OF PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE.

(HON. W. J. STEWARD, CHAIRMAN).

## ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

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

FRIDAY, THE 28TH DAY OF JULY, 1893.

*Ordered*, "That the correspondence on the subject of the appointment of the officers of the House, laid upon the table by Mr. Speaker (Paper A.—3), be referred to a Committee of Privileges, to consider the same and report its opinions thereon to the House."—(Hon. Sir J. HALL.)

FRIDAY, THE 11TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1893.

*Ordered*, "That the Privilege Committee, to which has been referred the correspondence on the subject of the Legislative officers, consist of twelve members, and that such Committee do consist of the following members—namely: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Mr. Seddon, the Hon. Sir R. Stout, the Hon. Mr. Rolleston, Mr. Guinness, Mr. G. Hutchison, Mr. W. Hutchison, Captain Russell, Mr. Saunders, Mr. R. Thompson, Mr. T. Thompson, and the mover: the Committee to have power to call for persons and papers; five to be a quorum."—(Hon. Sir J. HALL.)

## REPORT.

THE Privileges Committee, to whom the correspondence between Mr. Speaker and the Government relative to the appointment of *Hansard* Reporters has been referred, have taken evidence and obtained information relative to the several matters which form the subject of such correspondence, and have the honour to report as follows:—

1. That the House having directed by resolution, in passing the Legislative Estimates in the second session in 1891, that the vote be reduced by £1 as an indication that the Legislative Estimates should be under the control of the Government (*see Journals*, 17th September, 1891, and *Hansard*, Vol. lxxiv., 17th September, 1891, page 729), there was therefore no invasion of the privileges of the House in the Government appointing *Hansard* Reporters Gore and Russell; and, in making the selection from the officers in the Service, such course was in keeping with "The Civil Service Act, 1886," giving as it did promotion to two deserving officers, and at the same time making a saving in the public expenditure, seeing the services of these reporters are available for reporting Commissions during the recess, and that this will in no way interfere with their independence as *Hansard* Reporters during session.

2. That the resolution carried whilst the House was in Committee of Supply, in the second session of 1891, practically set aside any decision arrived at on this same subject in the session of 1862, and was in keeping with the report of a Committee of the House appointed during the session of 1888. Further, that permanent officers of the House are ordinary Civil servants, and the Estimates are presented to Parliament by Her Majesty's command, and upon the responsibilities of Ministers of the Crown. Mr. Speaker is not in the position of a Minister of the Crown; nor has he, or any other officer, any authority to vary the appropriation of any of the votes.

3. That there are several officers receiving large annual salaries, whose duties do not occupy them at the most more than six months in the year, and in some instances four months, while officers of the *Hansard* staff are only employed during the session. There is, therefore, no good reason why such officers should not be employed during the recess for the benefit of, and with economy to, the Public Service. That the full employment of only partially employed officers will enable the Government to lessen the officers otherwise employed without affecting the efficiency of the Government service, and will in no way lessen the independence of such officers during session or trench on the privileges of Parliament.

4. That in case any vacancies arise in the offices of the House the vacancies should be filled by promoting the officers then employed at the time such vacancies occur; and that in regard to the appointment of *Hansard* reporters, and with a view to encouraging the use of shorthand by officers of the Civil Service, and by holding out promotion to those officers who are making themselves efficient therein, preference should be given (unless under exceptional circumstances) to officers in the employ of the Government—this being in keeping with the spirit of the Civil Service Act.

5. That for two weeks before, and during the session, and for one month afterwards, the *Hansard* staff be under the control of the Speaker and the Printing Committee; and that for two weeks before, and during the session, and for one month thereafter, all other officers of the House and Council be under the control of the respective Speakers.