

out the plans. Again I said it was no business of mine, and I absolutely declined to say anything about it. But I said, "You may tell the Speaker, and any one else that asks you, that I think the report will be utterly unintelligible unless the plans go in."

134. Then, on all occasions, I understand, Mr. Martin, you declined to give any opinion?—Yes.

135. Have you any recollection of what purported to be an extract of an address by Sir Walter Buller made at the bar of the House—I think, read by Mr. Fraser?—I could not tell from memory. I was watching very carefully to see that this Horowhenua business would not drift into a political atmosphere. Sir Walter Buller was trying to make the best he could of it, and from first to last I was watching to see that it did not drift into a political question. Sir Walter Buller and others were continually quoting from speeches, *Hansard*, &c.

136. You stated the evidence would not be completed unless the blanks were filled in?—Yes.

137. *Mr. Hogg.*] Mr. Martin, when the Commission had finished its work, the report was drawn up, and the evidence left your hands, did you believe that evidence was complete?—The evidence did not leave my hands when the report was drawn up. The train and steamer were going to leave on the Tuesday morning, and Mr. Leslie had been unable to supply all these extracts, which had been left with the space for them at that time. Mr. Bush, of course, could not leave here until the report was out of our hands, and we finished the report on the Monday night, and, as Mr. Leslie had not had time to collect all these blanks, it was arranged that we should send in the report and give Mr. Leslie more time to complete his transcript of the evidence. So it was arranged we should send our report in, and in doing so tell the Premier that Maori names and extracts had to be checked, and that the evidence would be forwarded in due course. The report went in to the Premier, but the evidence did not come forward for some time, because Mr. Leslie wanted to see Mr. Morison, who was not in town, and also to have the matter checked. The matter rested for some days, and I was anxious to get the evidence sent in, lest some accident might take place, and, after a reasonable time, I told Mr. Leslie if he could not get the information it must be forwarded without it. I said, "In any case where you have not been able to get the blanks filled you must simply put 'extract read' in brackets." In due course I received from Mr. Leslie what I understood was the whole of the evidence completed, and sent it on to the Premier.

138. *Mr. G. Hutchison.*] Not the whole of the evidence—the evidence with these blanks?—The evidence with these blanks.

139. *Mr. Lang.*] I understand you to say, Mr. Martin, if the report had gone in without these plans it would be unintelligible?—Yes, we were constantly referring in the reports to numbers and sections, and members without a plan would not have been able to follow it. We had the whole of the land valued, and the valuers had it cut up into sections on a plan which they made, with the sections numbered, and without their plan their evidence would have been quite unintelligible.

140. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] You say the report was handed in about the 26th?—About the 27th.

141. About how many days after you finished your work on the Commission, after taking the evidence?—I should think, a fortnight or three weeks, but I really have not had time to look up papers with regard to it.

142. And the Commission had been sitting about how long?—From the 6th March, I think, and we finished, I think, on the 15th May—more than two months.

143. I suppose some of this matter that had to be supplied was in the earlier part of the evidence?—That is quite possible.

144. You did not know where the blanks were?—No.

145. Did Mr. Leslie complain to you?—Mr. Leslie complained to me several times during the sittings. We were sitting very long hours, and Mr. Leslie explained it would take four to five hours to transcribe one hours' shorthand, and that we should have to wait a considerable time for the transcript. We wanted to sit from 9.30 to 5.30 and again in the evening. I wrote to Mr. Seddon, and he sent me another reporter up.

146. It was said Mr. Leslie asked for more time over and over again. That was presumably between the time he asked you and the application made for the report?—After we had finished our sittings Mr. Leslie did ask for more time, and we gave it. He wanted more time. We said, "No, the thing must be finished"; with the result Mr. Leslie got assistance.

147. He got assistance during the two or three weeks?—Yes.

148. You gave instructions finally, where these blanks occurred, "Extract read" was to be put in, not that the matter was to be supplied?—Yes, I am quite clear and positive about that. When this matter cropped up the other day Mr. Leslie came to me and asked if I could charge my memory with what had passed, and he then appeared to be under the impression he was to supply these blanks. I pointed out to him that he was in error, that I could not understand his being under such an impression, and that he must know that once the matter had gone to the Premier it was out of our hands, and we were "dead." I knew Mr. McKerrow's recollection agreed with mine, and I telegraphed to Mr. Bush [telegram produced]:—

"R. S. Bush, S.M., Auckland.—Did you understand Leslie had any liberty to alter or in any way deal with transcript evidence after he delivered it us as complete, and we forwarded it Premier?—(Signed) James C. Martin, S.M."

[Reply.]

"Mr. R. S. Bush to Mr. J. C. Martin.—Certainly not to whole of your wire.—R. S. Bush, S.M., Auckland."

151. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] Mr. Bush says, "Certainly not"?—I am speaking very positively, and I say that there could be no misunderstanding. How could I sanction anything after it was beyond my control? We were very particular that the evidence should not be added to or altered in any way. After the evidence was all complete, Sir Walter Buller came and asked if he might add or correct something he had said; but we said, No; if he wished to add to his evidence or explain, he could write and say what he wanted, and we would attach his letter to the evidence,