

EVIDENCE.

MONDAY, 14TH AUGUST, 1905.

FRANCIS MARION BATES FISHER, member of the House of Representatives, sworn and examined.

Witness: I have alleged that a payment of about £70 was made to Captain R. J. S. Seddon in excess of his salary and travelling-allowances; that the payment was made in Christchurch; and that it was for reorganization of Defence stores. In support of this allegation I have submitted three affidavits, duly sworn by men who declare that they handled the voucher by which the payment was made. These affidavits I deliver to you sealed, as they were handed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives. These affidavits read as follows:—

First Affidavit.

1, William John Larcombe, of the City of Christchurch, in New Zealand, a clerk in the General Post Office at Christchurch, make oath and say as follows:—

1. That I am a clerk employed in the General Post Office, at Christchurch.
2. That at some date in the year 1904 there passed through my hands a voucher, made out in favour of R. J. S. Seddon, for the reorganization of the Defence stores at Wellington.
3. That such voucher was for an amount exceeding £70.
4. That I showed the said voucher to Joseph Willis, a clerk in the Chief Clerk's room at the Christchurch Post-office.
5. The amount of such voucher was charged against the Defence vote, but I cannot remember which part of such vote.
6. That at the time I showed the said voucher to the said Joseph Willis we both remarked on the fact of such voucher being made payable in Christchurch.

W. J. LARCOMBE.

Sworn at Christchurch, this 4th day of August, 1905, before me—C. E. Salter, a solicitor of the Supreme Court of New Zealand.

Second Affidavit.

1, Joseph Willis, of the City of Christchurch, in New Zealand, a clerk in the General Post Office, make oath and say as follows:—

1. That I am a clerk employed in the Chief Clerk's Office in the General Post Office, at Christchurch.
2. That some time during the year, 1904, I saw a voucher, made out in favour of R. J. S. Seddon, for the reorganization of the Defence stores at Wellington.
3. That such voucher was for an amount exceeding £70.
4. That the said voucher was shown to me by William John Larcombe, a clerk, employed in the Chief Clerk's room in the Post-office at Christchurch.
5. I distinctly remember that the amount of such voucher was charged against the Defence Vote, but which part of such vote I cannot remember.
6. That at the time such voucher was shown to me by the said William John Larcombe we both remarked on the fact of such voucher being made payable in Christchurch.

J. WILLIS.

Sworn at Christchurch, this 4th day of August, 1905, before me—C. E. Salter, a solicitor of the Supreme Court of New Zealand.

Third Affidavit.

1, Thomas Walter West, of the City of Christchurch, in New Zealand, a clerk in the General Post Office, make oath and say as follows:—

1. That I am a clerk employed in the office of the Chief Postmaster at Christchurch.
2. That some time during the year, 1904, I saw a voucher, made out in favour of R. J. S. Seddon, for the reorganization of the Defence stores.
3. That such voucher was for an amount exceeding £70.

T. W. WEST.

Sworn at Christchurch, this 4th day of August, 1905, before me—C. E. Salter, a solicitor of the Supreme Court of New Zealand.

These affidavits were made voluntarily, and without pressure or suggestion from me. I submit to you the names of the following officers from whom I believe that valuable information can be obtained: John Frame McBeth, Chief Postmaster, Christchurch; Richard Brabazon Morris, Chief Clerk, Post-office, Christchurch; David Hobson Lundon, clerk, Post-office, Christchurch; Kenneth McKay Rodger, cadet, Post-office, Christchurch.

FRIDAY, 18TH AUGUST, 1905.

THOMAS WALTER WEST SWORN and examined.

Witness: I am a clerk, employed in the office of the Chief Postmaster, at Christchurch. Some time during the year 1904 I saw a voucher made out in favour of R. J. S. Seddon for the reorganization of the Defence stores; such voucher was for an amount exceeding £70. The voucher was for a payment made by Treasury cheque, from the Paymaster-General. It was, to the best of my belief, paid to the signature of R. J. S. Seddon. I cannot positively say what my duties in the Chief Post-office were at the time when I saw the voucher; but, to the best of my belief, I was employed then as a clerk to the Chief Postmaster. As such clerk it would fall to my duty to deal with the vouchers for the payments made by Treasury cheques to be countersigned by the Chief Postmaster. The practice in dealing with such vouchers is that the envelope in which the vouchers are received from the Treasury is opened by me—the Treasury stamp indicates the con-