

*By Mr. Morphy:*

Q. Did it take place in his office?—A. Yes.

Q. Has the gentleman an office?—A. Yes.

Q. Did it take place in his office?—A. Yes.

Q. Did you go there at his request?—A. Yes.

Q. I see. Now then, having got this information, did you return to your own office and make a memorandum of it?—A. No.

Q. You have never made at any time any written memorandum of this important matter?—A. I have no doubt that I put it down on paper when I got in my own office again.

Q. Where is that memorandum?—A. It will be in my office, if I made it.

Q. Will you produce it.

WITNESS: Mr. Chairman, I would like—

*By Mr. Morphy:*

Q. You can answer that question.—A. I would like to have an understanding with this Committee. I understood in former years that I could receive confidential information in connection with my duties—

Q. Pardon me, I am coming to that later, what I want to find out now is that you assume the right to receive confidential information, in your official capacity as Auditor-General, and to act upon it. That is the general stand you take; will you now tell the Committee on what you base your right to receive confidential communications, verbally, and to use them as a public officer and afterwards refuse to disclose them to any Department of the Government, or to any one else, till it suits your own pleasure.—A. I always thought I should not be asked to disclose it, if the information can be obtained in any other way.

*By Mr. Carvell:*

Q. Will this Committee have power to obtain this information from any other source except yours, as far as you know?—A. I think they could go to the Admiralty.

Q. But we have no power over the British Admiralty. I think the point Mr. Morphy is making is a proper one.

*By Mr. Boys:*

Q. Do you believe the information you got from this gentleman to be reliable?—A. Yes.

Q. Did you report that information either to the Minister or to the Premier?—A. No.

Q. Why not?—A. Because I have not seen either of them since.

Q. But you could write a letter to them.—A. I could

Q. When did you receive the information?—A. In the early part of the winter.

Q. It was, of course, before this letter went to press.—A. I cannot recollect the exact date, I want to be sure of my dates.

Q. It is manifest that you must have got it before this letter went to the printer because it was owing to the fact that you were not satisfied with the reply you received that your letter was published in the report.—A. Yes, it was before.

Q. Is your position this; that you wanted to open up this subject-matter on the basis of confidential information which you were not willing to disclose to the Committee when the time came?—A. Pardon me, I want to make another statement—I did speak to a Minister.

Q. Who was it?—A. If the Committee will allow me, I would like to have his consent before giving his name. I want to go back, I started to make an explanation, but I was not allowed to finish. I understood I could receive confidential communications and not have to disclose them.