

as they had not had time to grasp the scope of the work imposed on the Commissioner, but he had a proposition to make, which, if agreed to, would put them in the way of doing so. His proposal was that the Commissioner should permit them to copy the Commission, so as to allow them to peruse it fully. Proposal agreed to.

After a few questions of general import were answered, and no further business being proposed, the proceedings were adjourned till 10 a.m. of the 4th instant.

RUNANGA-HOUSE, KAIAPOI, 4TH FEBRUARY, 1891.

Court of Inquiry opened at 10 a.m.

The Commissioner explained that he was prepared to hear any questions on the subject of the work to be transacted under the Commission.

Paratene te Uki stated that the Natives had not many questions to ask, as the time during the previous evening had been occupied in discussing various matters relative to their claims, consequently they had not formulated any questions. One matter he was deputed to apply to the Commissioner to have done was to request the Government to have the Commission printed in Maori. It was pointed out, in reply, that this was not a matter for the Commissioner to undertake, but rather for the Natives themselves if they deemed it necessary.

The report of the Joint Committee of 1889 was read out for the information of the people present.

After several persons had addressed the Court relative to the scope of the Commission, and the probability of its not accomplishing all they considered should be done in the matter, the Commissioner pointed out that it would be very unwise for them to oppose the proceedings for that reason, for if they adopted that line of action it would certainly prove disastrous to their cause, as it might be used as a weapon against them by those who were of opinion that all had been done that was requisite in fulfilment of the promises heretofore made.

H. K. Taiaroa stated that he wished to explain the nature of the action taken by him to retard the holding of the Commission until the Natives, or some one acting on their behalf, had had time to peruse it and determine as to its sufficiency. He had no intention to oppose the appointment of the Commissioner, but merely to postpone the execution of the Commission for the reason stated.

The Commissioner, in reply to further remarks on the subject of the scope of the Commission, pointed out the advisability of all parties assisting to their utmost to carry out the duty intrusted to him, and to make the best of the opportunity, in place of frustrating the work by holding aloof under the supposition that a more satisfactory mode of procedure would be found to deal with their claims, as it was highly improbable that any other plan would be adopted that would confer on them the anticipated advantages. After further discussion it was agreed that the work should be allowed to proceed, and that the Natives would aid in carrying it out, with a view to make it as complete as possible; and as a means of furthering this object they asked to be supplied with a list of the Kaiapoi residents, such list to include the approximate area owned by each Native. This completed the business, and the Court adjourned to Aparima till the 16th February, 1891.

RIVERTON, MONDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 1891.

Commission opened at the Courthouse, in pursuance with adjournment.

Commission read out.

Horomona Paatu addressed the Commissioner and stated generally his views with reference to the claims of the Natives in the Murihiku Block. Reihana te Maire, John Arnett, C. Goodwillie, W. Bates, and J. Stirling having spoken on the same subject, the Commissioner pointed out that the scope of the Commission was confined to the ascertainment of the names of the persons who were totally unprovided or insufficiently provided with land. No authority was conferred to take into consideration claims based on deceased individuals or on remote ancestors. The report of the Select Committee narrowed the matter to make provision for such persons who have insufficient land to support themselves on it by labour. As regards any claims they considered were entitled to consideration outside the matters comprised in the Commission, these would have to be furnished separately, and must form the subject of a separate report. It was further pointed out that the main object of the Commission was to elicit the fullest information respecting the condition of the people at all the settlements; and the sufficiency of the information was a matter that would rest entirely with themselves, but it was advisable to bear in mind the importance of aiding to the best of their ability in making the inquiry as exhaustive as possible.

With a view to expedite the proceedings it was agreed that the undermentioned persons should be chosen to form a Committee for the purpose of preparing a correct list of all the Aparima residents and their families—viz.: Charles Goodwillie, John Stirling, George Howell, John Arnett, John Stevens, William Bates, Tom Brown, George Hunter, George Thomas. On the lists being prepared they would be read out, and this would afford an opportunity for any persons who were omitted to apply to have their names included.

Meri Wehikore and Tamara Paororo applied for relief from the Government as they were both unable to work; asked that food and clothing be supplied them. The Commissioner stated that he would represent their case to the Government.

Horomona Paatu mentioned his claim to land at Thornbury. He stated that he had given land there to Mr. Howell prior to 1853 for a run for his cattle; considered that this land was not included in the sale to the Crown, and he had employed a solicitor at Invercargill (Mr MacAlister) to look into the matter on his behalf.

List of residents handed in by the Committee and read out. To insure accuracy each head of family present was questioned whether all the names had been included, and replied in the affirmative.

Commission adjourned till 9 a.m. of the 17th instant.