

The Commissioner stated that he would read out the names furnished, and perhaps that would shorten the proceedings.

G. P. Mutu asked why the Commissioner proposed to limit the time to the year 1848, the date of Kemp's purchase, and he would like to be informed for the information of those present the reason of coming to this conclusion.

H. K. Taiaroa asked what the Government intended to do relative to the claims of persons who had a right to land comprised in all the blocks sold to the Government.

The Commissioner stated that so far as he could answer the question, he was of opinion that the Government did not intend to deal with the question in the manner alluded to by the questioner; all that was proposed to be done, judging by the tenor of the recommendation made by the Committee, would be to provide land for those who were insufficiently provided for, irrespective of claims to any particular block.

Tanahira Waruwarutu stated that he considered that those who had claims in the different blocks should be allowed to prefer a claim to all their rights.

Paratene te Uki stated that he wished to draw attention to the proposal to deal with the Akaroa Block in the same manner as the Ngaitahu Block.

Paratene Tamanuiarangi stated the people were wearied of the same matter being brought up so many times. Inquiries were made from time to time as to the condition of the people, who supposed that some good would come from it; after much waiting, nothing eventuated. They therefore considered that Government were in possession of all the information it was necessary to be acquainted with to deal satisfactorily with their claims, and looked upon the present inquiry as useless. If Government intended to do anything, they were in possession of all the information that was necessary for the purpose, and if they did not propose to do anything, then it was fruitless to take further action.

G. P. Mutu stated that the people had been so annoyed at losing their fishing case, that they had become regardless of everything else, consequently, they had not prepared any business in readiness for the Commissioner.

List of persons living in 1891 read out and identified and a few fresh names added. List of persons living in 1848 at the time the reserves were made by Mr. Mantell, many of whom had not been provided for, read out and identified.

Paratene te Uki, T. P. Mutu, and others wanted to furnish a list of the names of all the people who had been born and died since 1848, as these persons had an equal right to be considered as well as those living in 1848. The Commissioner pointed out the claim was confined to the people who were living in 1848, as they were the people who owned the land, and could be the only people who had a right to be considered. Unborn persons were not possessed of rights; and many of the persons on whose behalf an attempt was being made to prefer a claim were not born till many years after.

Commission adjourned till the 3rd instant.

Memorandum: Taituha says that his daughter Mere Heni is of age. He wishes that the Public Trustee be informed to that effect, to enable her to receive her share of the road-money paid on Section 2058, Rakaia.

FRIDAY, 3RD APRIL, 1891.

Commission resumed.

Paratene te Uki stated that the Runanga had not met last evening, owing to the death of a child.

The Commissioner stated if they had no business ready he proposed to read out the lists of names received at the other settlements, to enable them to be identified, with a view to prevent the names being duplicated. Lists read out.

Hoani Maaka, G. P. Mutu, Paratene te Uki, Paratene Tamanuiarangi, Natanahira Waruwarutu, and others addressed the Commissioner relative to the grievance they had suffered through the delay in giving effect to the conditions of the Ngaitahu deed. The general purport of their remarks was to the effect that Government were merely trifling with the matter by continually appointing Commissions of Inquiry to investigate their claims, and on each occasion delaying a settlement of the matter, as if the intention was to protract a final adjustment of it. The most of the people had passed away. Their idea that this was the case was strengthened by the periodical enumerations that were made from time to time, each of which showed a marked decrease in the number by the death of many of their old people. The mode of procedure hitherto adopted by the Government was perfectly perplexing: their claims appeared to be admitted, otherwise why were Commissioners frequently appointed to inquire into them. The present was the third one since 1879, and the result of it would probably be the same as that of the previous ones. It would be better if Government would state plainly at once that they would not recognise their right to further consideration, and put an end to the disturbing element that was perpetually kept floating about, unsettling their minds and putting them to expense from time to time holding meetings to discuss the question as to the best mode to adopt to get the affair finally settled. It had already cost a considerable amount, and not a particle of benefit had accrued, nor did there appear any possibility that good would arise from it.

The Commissioner, while admitting that they had serious cause of complaint in regard to the delay in settling their claims, pointed out that it was advisable in their own interest, in place of holding themselves aloof, and to a certain extent obstructing the present work of obtaining the information needed to enable a report of their condition being furnished to the Governor, in pursuance with the Commission issued for the purpose, that they should do their utmost to assist, so that no excuse could arise for delaying the consideration of the questions because they had failed on their part to supply the necessary information, so as to make their case as complete as possible and thereby render further inquiry unnecessary. It must be apparent to them that if they