

SESS. II.—1897.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

(REPORT ON THE PETITION, No. 108, OF WIREMU POKIHA AND 653 OTHERS, TOGETHER WITH PETITION AND MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.)

Brought up on 16th December, 1897, and ordered to be printed.

REPORT.

No. 108.—Petition of WIREMU POKIHA and 653 others of the Ngatiporou Tribe.

PETITIONERS pray that their lands may be freed from the troubles caused by the dealings of the New Zealand Land Settlement Company (Limited).

I am directed to report that,—

The Committee, after taking evidence at considerable length, has arrived at the conclusion that so far as any imputation was cast upon two of its members, the Hon. J. Carroll and Mr. Wi Pere, as trustees of the property of the late New Zealand Native Land Company, such imputations are entirely without foundation. It is evident that the trustees have no private end to serve, and are evidently guarding the interests confided to them. The petitioners, who represent a large section of the Ngatiporou Tribe living about Waiapu, on the east coast of the North Island, are fearful that their lands will be incorporated with the trust estate, which they desire to avoid, although they do not disclaim liability to some extent to their fellow Natives whose lands have passed to the estate. The petition and evidence reveal a state of things on the East Coast regarding the Native lands and the estate of which Messrs. Carroll and Wi Pere are trustees which ought not to exist, and certainly ought not to be allowed to continue. It is injurious to all parties concerned—the Native owners, the trustees, the creditors, and the public.

A property of huge dimensions, and, according to evidence, of great fertility, is lying waste, while interest upon its debt is accumulating year by year. The trustees have no money to improve, and costly proceedings are necessary to determine what Natives and what Native lands are liable to contribute. Under these circumstances your Committee is strongly of opinion:—

1. That the work of the Validation Court should be suspended in all matters relating to the lands the subject-matter of the petition.

2. That a competent person or persons be appointed to inquire, if necessary upon oath, into all matters necessary to prove liability of lands and persons to the debts of the late Land Settlement Company, and the extent of such liability, and the capabilities of the land belonging to or connected with the estate for settlement.

3. That he or they should make a full report to Parliament at its next sitting; and append to such report suggestions for the final winding-up of the affairs of the late company and the utilisation of its estate.

Copy of minutes of evidence taken in this case is attached hereto.

16th December, 1897.

R. M. HOUSTON, Chairman.

[TRANSLATION.]

No. 108.—Pitihana a Wiremu Pokiha me etahi atu e ono rau e rima tekau ma toru o te iwi o Ngatiporou.

E inoi ana nga kai-pitihana kia whakawatearia to ratou whenua i nga raruraru kua eke ki runga i aua whenua i nga mahi a te Kamupane Whenua Maori o Niu Tirenī.

Kua whakahaua ahau kia ki penei: He nui nga korero i korerotia ki te aroaro o te Komiti, a tau ana i tona whakaaro kaore i tika nga whakapae mo ona mema e rua, mo Hon. Timi Kara, me Wi Pere, i runga i to raua tuunga hei kai-tiaki mo nga whenua o te Kamupane Whenua Maori o Niu Tirenī, a kaore rawa i kitea he tuunga wae wae mo aua kupu whakapae. E kitea ana kaore he painga mo raua ake e tahuri ai aua kai-tiaki ki te mahi i nga mahi rereke, otira kei te tino tiaki raua i nga whenua i hoatu ki a raua. Ko nga kai-pitihana he wahanga nui no te Iwi o Ngatiporou e noho ana i te takiwa o Waiapu, i te Tai Rawhiti o te Motu o Aotearoa, a e wehi ana ratou kei whakaurua o ratou whenua ki roto ki nga whenua e tiakina nei e aua kai-tiaki, a e hiahia ana ratou kua o ratou whenua e uru ki reira, otira kaore ratou e whakakore ana i te ekenga ki runga ki a ratou o