

1898.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS OF WASTE LANDS COMMITTEE.

(MR. R. THOMPSON, CHAIRMAN.)

Presented to the House of Representatives, and ordered to be printed.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

TUESDAY, THE 28TH DAY OF JUNE, 1898.

Ordered, "That a Committee be appointed, consisting of ten members, to consider all Bills and petitions that may be introduced into this House affecting the waste lands of the Crown, and to report generally upon the principles and provisions which they contain, with power to confer and sit together with any similar Committee which may be appointed by the Legislative Council, and agree to a joint or separate report: the Committee to have power to call for persons, papers, and records; three to be a quorum. The Committee to consist of Mr. Duncan, Mr. Flatman, Mr. Gilfedder, Mr. Hogg, Mr. Lang, Hon. Mr. W. Rolleston, Mr. R. Thompson, Mr. J. W. Thomson, Mr. Wason, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. J. McKENZIE.)

FRIDAY, THE 22ND DAY OF JULY, 1898.

Ordered, "That the question of the purchase of the Otahu Estate under the Land for Settlements Act be referred to the Waste Lands Committee to investigate the circumstances under which the purchase was made, the suitability of the land for settlement, and the disposal of the estate since its purchase; the Committee to have power to call for persons and papers; and that it be a direction of the House to the Committee that all evidence is to be taken in full in shorthand and laid upon the table of the House with the Committee's report."—(Hon. Mr. J. McKENZIE.)

THURSDAY, THE 18TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1898.

Ordered, "That the petition of A. McKeown be referred to the Waste Lands Committee."—(MR. MEREDITH.)

WEDNESDAY, THE 28TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1898.

Ordered, "That the petition of S. Southsby be referred to the Waste Lands Committee."—(MR. MEREDITH.)

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No. 18.—Petition of J. G. HAMILTON, Chairman, Pollok Road Board.

PETITIONER prays that the sum of £350 may be granted by the Government towards making and improving the main road through the Pollok Settlement.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to the Government for consideration.

20th July, 1898.

No. 53.—Petition of W. F. L. A. PARSONS and Others, Waiotu, Bay of Islands.

PETITIONERS pray that the sum of £500 may be granted by the Government towards making the Waiotu-Hukerenui Road to connect the several settlers' farms with the railway at Hukerenui.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to the Government for consideration.

20th July, 1898.

No. 49.—Petition of John D. BENTLEY, Auckland.

PETITIONER states that he is an old soldier from Her Majesty's 24th Regiment; that he laid his claim for a grant of land before the late Commissioner, Mr. J. McKerrow; that, owing to petitioner having made alterations in the wording of his discharge from the army, the Commissioner refused to entertain his claim. He prays for consideration.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.

20th July, 1898.

No. 25.—Petition of B. HEWETT and Others, Waimai, Raglan.

PETITIONERS pray that the sum of £600 may be granted by the Government towards constructing a road from Kakahuru Valley to the Waingaro-Ngaruawahia Road.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to the Government for consideration.

20th July, 1898.

No. 189, 1897.—Petition of ELLEN HUMBER, Picton.

PETITIONER prays for compensation for injury caused to her land by the construction of the Picton-Blenheim line of railway.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that petitioner has no claim upon the colony.

3rd August, 1898.

No. 44.—Petition of HIBERNIA SMITH, Waikomiti, Auckland.

PETITIONER prays that a road be opened through his land at Waikomiti.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion this petition should be referred to Government for favourable consideration.

17th August, 1898.

No. 141.—Petition of JAMES PETERSON and Others, Waikawa, Southland.

PETITIONERS pray for a reduction of their rent.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion this petition should be referred to Government for consideration.

17th August, 1898.

No. 191.—Petition of JOHN MCGREGOR, Wanganui.

PETITIONER prays for a rehearing before the Native Appellate Court as to his title to property at Kaiwaka, Wanganui.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to the Native Affairs Committee for consideration.

18th August, 1898.

No. 170.—Petition of A. McKEOWN, Pihama, Opunake.

PETITIONER prays for return of costs incurred by him in an action against the Public Trustee to compel the latter to contribute towards the repairing of a boundary-fence between petitioner and certain Natives.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that an amendment of the law is required giving larger discretionary powers to the Public Trustee to deal with fencing between European and Native occupiers; and that there seems to be no legal responsibility on the part of the Government for law expenses incurred by the petitioner.

19th August, 1898.

No. 86.—Petition of F. MCGOVERN, Taita, Hutt.

PETITIONER prays that a Crown grant be issued to him for Sections 19 and 20, Block XII., in the Town of Port Molyneux, in accordance with an arrangement with the Government when portion of his land was taken for a road.

I am directed to report that, inasmuch as the Crown has had beneficial possession of the road for which the land was granted in exchange for the last thirty-one years, the Committee recommend that Crown grants be issued for the sections in question.

23rd August, 1898.

No. 85.—Petition of G. V. KEMSLEY and Others, Reikiorangi, Wellington.

PETITIONERS state they are members of a fruit-growing association which took up land at Reikiorangi, in the Wellington Province. They pray for a reduction of their rents.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that the values originally placed on the sections are excessive and should be reduced. They suggest that some means of relief should be made in an amending Land Act.

23rd August, 1898.

No. 214, 1897.—Petition of W. T. ERSKINE and Others, Havelock, Marlborough.

PETITIONERS pray that Government will purchase the Rai Valley Tramway, and open up the Ronga and Opouri Valleys for sawmilling and settlement purposes.

I am directed to report that, having heard the evidence of a number of witnesses in support of the petition, the Committee are unable to recommend the Government to purchase the tramway from Messrs. Brownlee and Company.

A copy of the evidence is attached. (*Vide* Appendix I.—5B.)

1st September, 1898.

Nos. 5 and 135.—Petitions of C. Y. FELL and Others, Nelson, and W. POLLARD and Others, Awatere.

PETITIONERS pray that the valleys of the Rai, Ronga, and Opouri may be conserved as a national park, and the timber therein preserved for all time.

No. 19.—Petition of E. PURSER and Others, Blenheim.

A counter-petition to the foregoing, wherein petitioners pray that the lands in question may be opened for sawmilling and settlement purposes.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that the Government should carefully consider the best means of conserving the valuable forest lands in the valleys of the Rai, Ronga, and Opouri.

A copy of the evidence is attached. (*Vide* Appendix I.—5B.)

1st September, 1898.

No. 144.—Petition of CHARLES KOCH and 44 Others, Greenstone, Wakatipu.

PETITIONERS pray that the new regulations for the cutting of timber in New Zealand forests be repealed, and the old law reverted to.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that the regulations should be revived so as to give the Land Board discretionary power to fix the license-fee for cutting timber, or to vary the fees according to the accessibility or value of the timber.

13th September, 1898.

No. 223.—Petition of RUSSELL BATES, Kai-Iwi, Auckland.

PETITIONER states that his leasehold at Kai-Iwi is held at too high a rent; and that he has no means of access to his land from the Kaihu Valley. He prays for consideration and redress.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.

13th September, 1898.

PURCHASE OF THE OTAHU ESTATE.

THE Waste Lands Committee, to whom above-mentioned subject was referred for investigation and report, have the honour to report that, having heard the statements of Mr. J. McKerrow, Chairman of the Land Purchase Board, also the Hon. J. G. Ward, M.H.R., Mr. Batger, and Mr. J. W. Kelly, M.H.R. (who withdrew all charges of impropriety against the department), they are satisfied there is no ground whatever for any charges in connection with the purchase of the Otahu Estate having been made against the Hon. Mr. Ward or the Land Purchase Department.

A copy of the evidence and proceedings of the inquiry is attached. (*Vide* Appendix I.—5A.)
23rd September, 1898.

No. 172.—Petition of THOMAS BARTON and Others, Woodleigh, Raglan.

PETITIONERS pray that their holdings may be revalued, with a view to the reduction of the rents paid by them.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that this petition should be referred to Government for consideration.

4th October, 1898.

No. 179.—Petition of R. J. TRACEY and Others, Peria.

PETITIONERS pray for a Government grant of £400 for the purpose of widening and bridging the road between Peria and Mangatanewha.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

4th October, 1898.

No. 174.—Petition of J. A. RIDDELL and Others, Otago Heads Road Board.

PETITIONERS pray that a Government surveyor be appointed to perform the survey-works of the Otago Heads Road Board.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

4th October, 1898.

No. 235.—Petition of DUNCAN McRAE and Others, Strath Taieri.

PETITIONERS pray that their holdings in Strath Taieri, Otago, may be revalued, with a view to a reduction in the rents paid by them.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to the Hon. the Minister of Lands for consideration.

4th October, 1898.

No. 202.—Petition of C. VINCENT and Others, Whangamarino.

PETITIONERS pray for a grant of money for the purpose of removing snags from the Whangamarino River.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for further inquiry.

4th October, 1898.

No. 190.—Petition of A. FINLAYSON and Others, Dipton.

PETITIONERS pray that Government will grant a subsidy of £200 towards opening 140 chains of road through Taringatura Survey District.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.

4th October, 1898.

No. 177.—Petition of GEORGE WARD DRAPER, Ratanui.

PETITIONER prays for compensation for the closing of a road which ran through his property at Ratanui.

I am directed to report that the Committee see no reason to vary the report brought up by the Waste Lands Committee in the session of 1897 upon a similar petition from the same person—viz., that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.

18th October, 1898.

Nos. 229, 310, and 313.—Petitions of DONALD McRAE and Others, ALEXANDER McLEAN and Others, and W. J. BAXTER and Others.

THE petitioners pray that the rents of their leaseholds may be reduced.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that these petitions be referred to the Government for consideration.

18th October, 1898.

No. 252.—Petition of E. WAGNER and Others, Opaheke.

PETITIONERS pray for a grant of money to form and metal a road through the Opaheke district.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to the Government for consideration.

18th October, 1898.

No. 224.—Petition of CRADDOCK BEAUCHAMP, Anakina, Picton.

PETITIONER prays that he be allowed to surrender the lease of his farm at Anakina, Picton, and that he be granted a new lease under the provisions of the West Coast Settlement Act.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.
18th October, 1898.

No. 306.—Petition of JAMES NIXON, Auckland.

PETITIONER prays that he be granted 100 acres of land to which his father was gazetted as entitled in January, 1864.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.
18th October, 1898.

No. 260.—Petition of WALTER GIBSON and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that an investigation be held into the administration of the Crown lands in the County of Kaikoura.

I am directed to report that the Committee, having carefully inquired into the allegations contained in this petition, and taken the evidence of Mr. Gibson; Mr. James McKerrow, Chairman, Land Purchase Board; Mr. McMillan, land valuer; Mr. Meredith, M.H.R.; and Mr. C. W. Adams, Crown Lands Commissioner for Marlborough, are of opinion that there is no foundation for the allegations contained in this petition.

The Committee also desire to place on record their regret that so many settlers should have been induced to sign such a petition without having first satisfied themselves as to the truth of the charges so recklessly made therein against the administration of the Lands Department in that district. (For evidence thereon *vide* Appendix I.—5c.)

20th October, 1898.

No. 332.—Petition of JOSEPH EVANS and Others, Awanui.

PETITIONERS pray Government will grant a sum of money to metal the Great North Road between Mongonui and Awanui.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

25th October, 1898.

No. 324.—Petition of WILLIAM MATHESON, Ballance.

PETITIONER prays for a remission of his rent now due, owing to his grass and crop having been destroyed by fire last summer.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

25th October, 1898.

No. 235.—Petition of M. LYNCH and Others, Poho-nui-atane, Hunterville.

PETITIONERS pray that a bridle-track may be formed between their settlement and Hunterville.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

25th October, 1898.

No. 365.—Petition of A. MCKINNON and Others, Ohinewai.

PETITIONERS pray for a grant of £200 to open a road on the west side of the Waikato River, between Huntly and Ngaruawahia.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

25th October, 1898.

No. 317.—Petition of F. LIVOCK and Others, Papamoa.

PETITIONERS pray that the residence clause of the Act may not be enforced with regard to their holdings in the Special Settlements Nos. 1 and 2, Papamoa.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.
25th October, 1898.

No. 284.—Petition of THOMAS LAWRENCE, Woolston.

PETITIONER prays for compensation for improvements made by him on his leasehold farm at Puke-tohi prior to surrendering his lease.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.
25th October, 1898.

No. 171.—Petition of C. R. MUNRO and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that a bridge may be constructed over the Wairoa River.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

3rd November, 1898.

No. 359.—Petition of ADAM JACKSON, Ealing.

PETITIONER prays for a reduction by Government in the price agreed upon for his farm, owing to the poorness of the soil thereon.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

3rd November, 1898.

No. 270.—Petition of GEORGE JENNINGS and Others, Te Arai.

PETITIONERS pray that the road between Warkworth and Te Arai may be completed.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

3rd November, 1898.

No. 200.—Petition of A. WATSON and Others, Lilburn, Southland.

PETITIONERS pray that their holdings at Lilburn may be revalued, with a view to a reduction of their rents.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

3rd November, 1898.

No. 108.—Petition of FRITZ BAYER and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that a road may be opened into their holdings in the Waiwera district.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

3rd November, 1898.

No. 281.—Petition of GEORGE EVANS and Others, Awanui.

PETITIONERS pray that the block of land lately surveyed by Government with a view to selling it to Mr. Subritzki be withdrawn from sale, and retained as Crown lands.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that the Government withdraw the land in question from sale.

3rd November, 1898.

No. 366.—Petition of J. EDEN and Others, Maunganui.

PETITIONERS pray that their lands at Maunganui Bluff may be revalued, with a view to a reduction of their rents.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

3rd November, 1898.

No. 382.—Petition of A. WILSON and Others, Lake Wanaka.

PETITIONERS pray that the law may be altered in order that the public may have the power to vote in the election of the Wanaka Islands Domain Board.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

3rd November, 1898.

No. 48.—Petition of FRANCIS HULL, Auckland.

PETITIONER prays that he may be issued a remission certificate for £30, which he bought from one John Dempsey in the year 1893.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to Government for consideration.

3rd November, 1898.

No. 278.—Petition of W. C. PAGE, Ashburton.

PETITIONER prays that Government will allow him to surrender his farm, and return his purchase-money, as he finds he has no road to his land.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.

3rd November, 1898.

No. 377.—Petition of DONALD McLAREN DOUGLAS and Others, Wainuioro.

PETITIONERS pray that the rents of their holdings may be remitted for a period of two years, they having suffered severely from the bush-fires in January, 1898.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.

3rd November, 1898.

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