

SESSION II.
1912.
NEW ZEALAND.

LANDS COMMITTEE

(REPORTS OF THE).

(MR. E. NEWMAN, CHAIRMAN.)

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

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

WEDNESDAY, THE 3RD DAY OF JULY, 1912.

Ordered, "That Standing Order No. 219 be suspended, and that a Committee be appointed, consisting of eleven members, to whom shall stand referred after the first reading all Bills affecting or in any way relating to the lands of the Crown, or educational or other public reserves; the Committee to have power to make such amendments therein as they think proper, and to report generally when necessary upon the principles and provisions of the Bill; the Committee to have power to call for persons, papers, and records; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Anderson, Hon. Mr. Buddo, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Lang, Mr. E. Newman, Mr. Nosworthy, Mr. T. W. Rhodes, Mr. R. W. Smith, Mr. Witty, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. T. MACKENZIE.)

TUESDAY, THE 13TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1912.

Ordered, "That the names of Mr. Coates, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Statham, and the mover be added to the Lands Committee, and that the name of Mr. Lang be omitted."—(Hon. Mr. MASSEY.)

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REPORTS.

No. 40.—Petition of CONSTANCE McDONNELL, of Wellington.

PRAYING for compensation in connection with the lease of a small grazing-run at Karioi, or that special legislation be passed to enable the Land Board to allot 640 acres of bush land on the said small grazing-run to petitioner so as to enable her to dispose of the said land at a profit.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that a sum of money be provided on the estimates to be paid to Mrs. McDonnell equivalent to the equity between the offer of the Land Board to her and the sum that the Commissioner of Crown Lands considers would be realized for the land and timber if disposed of now in the open market, such valuation and payment to be final, and paid on certificate of Commissioner.

6th August, 1912.

AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL SOCIETIES AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Agricultural and Pastoral Societies Amendment Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments as shown on the copy attached hereto.

13th August, 1912.

No. 69.—Petition of HARRIET CORSTON, of Auckland.

PRAYING for an increase of compensation, or the restoration of a Crown land grant.

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

13th August, 1912.

No. 130.—Petition of JOSEPH RHIND, of Waitakaruru.

PRAYING that a section of land presented to him by Mahuta Tawhiao, and included in a block subsequently purchased by the Government, be thrown open subject to the loading of his improvements.

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

5th September, 1912.

AUCKLAND EDUCATION RESERVES BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Auckland Education Reserves Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments as shown on the copy attached hereto.

11th September, 1912.

NEW PLYMOUTH HUATOKI STREAM DIVERSION AND EXCHANGE BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the New Plymouth Huatoki Stream Diversion and Exchange Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed as amended by the Local Bills Committee.

11th September, 1912.

No. 137.—Petition of C. JOHNSTONE and 5 Others, of Raglan.

PRAYING that subsection (e) of clause 2 of the Rating Act, 1908, repealed by the amending Act of 1910, be re-enacted.

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

11th September, 1912.

No. 168.—Petition of PATANGATA COUNTY COUNCIL.

PRAYING for payment of rates on the Manawaangi Block.

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

19th September, 1912.

WELLINGTON CITY EMPOWERING AND AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Wellington City Empowering and Amendment Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments as shown on the copy attached hereto.

19th September, 1912.

WHAKATANE HARBOUR BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Whakatane Harbour Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments as shown on the copy of the Bill attached hereto.

19th September, 1912.

WESTLAND HOSPITAL AND CHARITABLE AID BOARD VESTING AND EMPOWERING BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Westland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board Vesting and Empowering Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed as amended by the Local Bills Committee.

19th September, 1912.

PAPER NO. C183: REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, NEW PLYMOUTH, UPON THE CASE OF JOHN MAHER *re* SECTION 3, BLOCK XV, OHURA.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the above paper, have the honour to report that, having heard Mr. Wilson, M.P., who is acquainted with the facts from Mr. Maher's point of view, and Mr. O'Neill, Assistant Under-Secretary for Lands, the Committee is of opinion that Mr. Maher should be recommended to petition the House, if he thinks fit, with regard to his claim.

25th September, 1912.

WELLINGTON HARBOUR BOARD EMPOWERING BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Wellington Harbour Board Empowering Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed as amended by the Local Bills Committee.

25th September, 1912.

OAMARU KING GEORGE'S PARK RESERVE VESTING BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Oamaru King George's Park Reserve Vesting Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed as amended by the Local Bills Committee.

25th September, 1912.

No. 24.—Petition of W. S. BUSSELL and 7 Others, of Kaikoura.

PRAYING for an amendment in the Public Reserves Act so as to enable them to obtain a renewal of their leases for a further period of twenty-one years.

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

25th September, 1912.

No. 157.—Petition of JAMES McCONNELL, of Walton.

PRAYING for compensation for loss of crop on the Mimosa Downs Settlement owing to the delay of the Land Purchase Board in having the property surveyed.

I am directed to report that, as the petitioner has not exhausted his legal remedies, the Committee have no recommendation to make.

26th September, 1912.

ROSS BOROUGH COUNCIL VESTING AND EMPOWERING AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Ross Borough Council Vesting and Empowering Amendment Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendment as shown on the copy attached hereto.

26th September, 1912.

HAURAKI PLAINS AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Hauraki Plains Amendment Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed without amendment.

26th September, 1912.

LAND AGENTS REGISTRATION BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Land Agents Registration Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments as shown on the copy attached hereto.

26th September, 1912.

No. 213.—Petition of ROBERT SUTHERLAND, of Clifden, Wallace.

PRAYING that he be compensated for land taken for road purposes at Lillburn.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make on this petition.
4th October, 1912.

No. 46.—Petition of H. CLOVER and 15 Others, of Hauraki Plains.

PRAYING for three years' remission of rent, the amount to be added to the capital value of the land or repayable by half-yearly instalments after three years.

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

4th October, 1912.

LAND LAWS AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Land Laws Amendment Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments as shown on the copy attached hereto (*vide* Appendix I.—5B).

9th October, 1912.

No. 136.—Petition of W. F. GORDON-JONES and Others, of Taheke, Auckland.

PRAYING that the Government acquire the endowment lands at Punakitere from the Auckland and Parnell Corporations.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make on this petition.
9th October, 1912.

AUCKLAND HARBOUR BOARD EMPOWERING BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Auckland Harbour Board Empowering Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed as amended by the Local Bills Committee.

11th October, 1912.

ELLESMERE LANDS DRAINAGE AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Ellesmere Lands Drainage Amendment Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments as shown on the copy attached hereto.

11th October, 1912.

No. 201.—Petition of E. MARSLIN and 41 Others, of Alexandra.

PRAYING that one William Noble may be granted compensation in connection with a section of land at Alexandra.

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

11th October, 1912.

No. 270.—Petition of HARRY VOGHT, of New Plymouth.

PRAYING for compensation for loss sustained through non-completion of contract by Advances to Settlers Department.

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

15th October, 1912.

No. 273.—Petition of R. YOUNG and Others, of Mount Eden, Auckland.

PRAYING that portion of the Public Domain, Mount Eden Borough, be not alienated.

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

15th October, 1912.

No. 250.—Petition of W. R. NEVILL and 31 Others, of Ida Valley.

PRAYING for a reduction in the rate for irrigation under the Government Ida Valley irrigation scheme.

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

15th October, 1912.

No. 145.—Petition of E. BLACK and 12 Others, of Taieri.

PRAYING for relief in respect of rates on loans raised under the Taieri Drainage Acts.

I am directed to report that the Committee has no recommendation to make on this petition.

15th October, 1912.

No. 272.—Petition of J. B. STEEDMAN and Sons, of Thames.

PRAYING for restoration of timber rights and acquired privileges in connection with the watershed of Waikawau.

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

15th October, 1912.

No. 240.—Petition of E. H. HARDY and 117 Others, of Te Kuiti.

PRAYING that Pukenui No. 2T Block, Borough of Te Kuiti, may be acquired for subdivision.

I am directed to report that, as a question of policy is involved, the Committee have no recommendation to make.

15th October, 1912.

No. 222.—Petition of PATRICK J. MURPHY, of Hihitahi.

PRAYING for compensation for alleged wrongful arrest and action taken against him, charging him with having offered to accept money as an inducement to abstain from bidding as an intending purchaser of a license of Crown lands—to wit, a pastoral run in the Raketapauma Block.

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

15th October, 1912.

DUNEDIN GARRISON HALL TRUSTEES EMPOWERING BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Dunedin Garrison Hall Trustees Empowering Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed without amendment.

22nd October, 1912.

No. 336.—Petition of ALBERT WILLIAM PAGE, of Cheviot.

PRAYING for legislation empowering the District Land Registrar at Christchurch to register a transfer of a lease-in-perpetuity section to him.

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

22nd October, 1912.

No. 287.—Petition of JOHN MAHER, of Taumarunui.

PRAYING for an inquiry into the sale of Section 3, Block XV, Ohura Survey District.

I am directed to report that, after inquiry, the Committee recommend that the Lands Department take back the petitioner's lease and return the purchase price to him.

22nd October, 1912.

No. 338.—Petition of GILBERT MAIR and 4 Others, of Waiotapu.

PRAYING for an extension of the term of their pastoral leases in the Rotorua District, and compensation for improvements.

I am directed to report that in the opinion of the Committee, as the subject-matter of the petition is now being dealt with by the Government, the petition should be referred to it for consideration.

22nd October, 1912.

No. 27.—Petition of CHARLES DE ST CROIX, of Coromandel.

PRAYING for a refund of money paid for kauri timber growing on his section, Hauraki, and the cancellation of the balance of liability thereon.

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

22nd October, 1912.

No. 286.—Petition of C. R. EDGEcombe and 11 Others, of Manawaangi, Porangahau, Hawke's Bay.

PRAYING for the deduction of the " thirds " from the purchase-money of the Manawaangi Block.

I am directed to report that in the opinion of the Committee this petition should be referred to the Government, as legislation is required to give effect to the prayer of the petitioners.

22nd October, 1912.

No. 334.—Petition of JAMES DAVID GOLLAN, of Dannevirke.

PRAYING for compensation for loss suffered through loss of tenancy of the Te Whitiata Block purchased by the Native Land Purchase Board.

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

29th October, 1912.

PUBLIC RESERVES AND DOMAINS AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Public Reserves and Domains Amendment Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed without amendment.

29th October, 1912.

No. 115.—Petition of A. R. WALLIS and Others, of Southland.

PRAYING for an inquiry into certain sawmill areas in Southland, and that the law be amended to allow for an appeal to the Supreme Court as to the validity of the titles thereto.

I am directed to report that in the opinion of the Committee this petition should be referred to the Government with a recommendation that the prayer of the petitioners be granted. The minutes of evidence are attached hereto. (*Vide* Paper I.—5c.)

31st October, 1912.

No. 295.—Petition of R. F. HENDERSON and Others, of Oxford.

PRAYING for relief in connection with their tenancy of Run 222, Oxford.

I am directed to report that in the opinion of the Committee this petition should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration, with a recommendation that provision be made in the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Leasing Bill giving power to the Land Board to deal with any claim the petitioners may have.

31st October, 1912.

OPUNAKE HARBOUR AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Opunake Harbour Amendment Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed as amended by the Local Bills Committee.

31st October, 1912.

REPORT ON PAPER No. 226 C, " Details in connection with the Purchase and Fencing of Part of Runanga No. 1A Block."

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the above parliamentary paper, have the honour to report that during the course of the inquiry they examined the following witnesses:—

- J. Strauchon, Under-Secretary for Lands ;
- H. A. Walshe, Assistant-Surveyor, Lands Department ;
- W. C. Kensington, I.S.O., late Under-Secretary for Lands ;
- R. Keene, Land Agent, Wellington ;
- R. Beere, Solicitor, Wellington ;
- F. J. Taylor, Settler, Runanga ;
- T. Ballan, Christchurch ; and
- A. Patterson, Accountant, Lands Department.

Mr. Russell, M.P., attended a meeting of the Lands Committee, read and put in a written statement, but declined to answer questions or give evidence, on the ground that there was no charge against him.

The Committee, having given the whole matter their careful consideration, decided to formulate certain questions, and set down their answers thereto. The questions and answers are as follows:—

1. Was it desirable that the Government acquire the property?—*Answer*: Yes.
2. Could the land purchased, other than that actually required for roads, be acquired in any other way except by private treaty?—*Answer*: Yes; but it was not advisable to do so.
3. Was the price excessive?—*Answer*: Not under the circumstances.
4. Was Mr. Russell, M.P., responsible for the completion of the sale of this portion of Runanga to the Government?—*Answer*: Yes; by reducing the price from £4, which had been asked by the previous owner, to £2 10s. per acre.
5. Did Mr. Russell, M.P., use undue influence as a member of Parliament to effect the sale?—*Answer*: No.

6. Did Mr. Russell, M.P., conduct the negotiations in his own name?—*Answer*: No; all the negotiations were conducted by him in the name of Thomas Ballin, the previous owner; and Mr. W. C. Kensington, then Under-Secretary for Lands, stated in evidence that he did not recognize Mr. Russell as the owner.

The Committee recommends that the provisions of section 59 of the Land for Settlements Act, 1908, should be extended so as to enable lands acquired not only under paragraph (b) of section 6 of the Lands for Settlements Act, 1908, but also lands acquired under paragraphs (c) and (e) of section 6, to be held under the same tenure as neighbouring Crown lands.

The minutes of evidence and proceedings, correspondence, &c., are attached hereto.

31st October, 1912.

EDWARD NEWMAN,
Chairman.

(*Vide* Appendix I.—5A.)

RESERVES AND OTHER LANDS DISPOSAL AND PUBLIC BODIES EMPOWERING BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments as shown on the copy attached hereto.

4th November, 1912.

NAPIER HARBOUR BOARD AMENDMENT AND ENDOWMENT IMPROVEMENT BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Napier Harbour Board Amendment and Endowment Improvement Bill, have the honour to report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed as amended by the Local Bills Committee.

5th November, 1912.

No. 303.—Petition of W. C. O'REILLY and 8 Others, of the Tongioio Special Settlement.

PRAYING for a reduction of rent owing to the presence of blackberries, &c., reducing the carrying-capacity of their land to one-half.

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

5th November, 1912.

No. 339.—Petition of JOHN WOULDDES and Another, of Kiritehere.

PRAYING for twelve months' remission of rent on account of losses by fire.

I am directed to report that, as provision is made in the Land Act for such cases, the Committee recommend that the petition be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

5th November, 1912.

No. 391.—Petition of GEORGE DOIG and Another, of Blackwater, Reefton.

PRAYING for a refund of £21 11s., being an amount paid for land to the New Zealand Midland Railway Company, and subsequently paid into the Public Account.

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

5th November, 1912.

SPECIAL REPORT (*re* Chairman).

THE Lands Committee desire to place on record their appreciation of the courtesy, tact, and absolute fairness manifested by the Chairman, Mr. Edward Newman, in presiding over the deliberations of the Committee during the session.

5th November, 1912.

SPECIAL REPORT (*re* Clerk).

THE Lands Committee desire to place on record their cordial appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. Collings, clerk to the Committee. His unfailing courtesy, punctual attention to business, and ability displayed in recording the proceedings have commanded the respect of the Committee, and they have pleasure in recommending that his services should be retained, and that he be given permanent Government employment.

It was resolved unanimously that this resolution be reported to the House and referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

5th November, 1912.

FINAL REPORT.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Lands Committee have during the session held 28 meetings; 18 Bills, 29 petitions, and 2 papers were referred to them for consideration, all of which have been reported to the House.

5th November, 1912.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (1,400 copies), £4 10s.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1912.

Price 6d.]