

1927.
NEW ZEALAND.

GOLDFIELDS AND MINES COMMITTEE

(REPORTS OF THE).



(MR. J. RHODES, CHAIRMAN.)

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

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

THURSDAY, THE 14TH DAY OF JULY, 1927.

Ordered, "That a Select Committee be appointed, consisting of ten members, to whom shall be referred all matters relating to mining, and all Bills relating to mines; with power to call for persons and papers; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Bitchener, Mr. H. E. Holland, Mr. Horn, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Parry, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Samuel, Mr. Seddon, Mr. Waite, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. ANDERSON.)

Ordered, "That all petitions not finally dealt with during the session of 1926 be again referred to the same Committees as they were referred to during the said session."—(Right Hon. Mr. COATES.)

WEDNESDAY, THE 4TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1927.

Ordered, "That the petition of J. T. Johnson be referred direct to the Goldfields and Mines Committee."—(Mr. SIDEY.)

THURSDAY, THE 1ST DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1927.

Ordered, "That the Dunedin City Corporation Empowering Amendment Bill be referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee."—(Mr. SIDEY, for Mr. TAPLEY.)

FRIDAY, THE 30TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1927.

Ordered, "That the petition of J. T. Johnson be referred direct to the Goldfields and Mines Committee."—(Mr. FORBES, for Mr. SIDEY.)

MONDAY, THE 17TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 1927.

Ordered, "That the Mining Amendment Bill be referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee."—(Hon. Mr. ANDERSON.)

WEDNESDAY, THE 2ND DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1927.

Ordered, "That the Coal-mines Amendment Bill be referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee."—(Hon. Mr. ANDERSON.)

THURSDAY, THE 10TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1927.

Ordered, "That the petition of M. Muncaster be referred direct to the Goldfields and Mines Committee."—(Mr. SAVAGE, for Mr. H. E. HOLLAND.)

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF THE GOLDFIELDS AND MINES COMMITTEE.

Paper No. 2, "Regulations under the Mining Act, 1926," having been laid upon the Table of the House on the 8th July, 1927, stands referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee for report.—E. W. KANE, Clerk, House of Representatives.
12th July, 1927.

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REPORTS.

No. 111.—Petition of WILLIAM ROBERT LEATHER, of Huntly.

PRAYING for an investigation into the administration for coal-mining purposes of an area known as Lake Waahi, Huntly.

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

19th August, 1927.

No. 2.—Petition of MARY S. DICKSON, of Thames.

PRAYING that she be granted a compassionate allowance equal to the Miners' widows' pension.

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

19th August, 1927.

No. 114.—Petition of HANNAH WILSON and 21 Others.

PRAYING that the Kaitangata Relief Fund be made available for the widows and children of the miners who lost their lives in the Kaitangata disaster on the 21st February, 1879.

I am directed to report that in the opinion of the Committee this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration, with a recommendation that the law be amended to empower the Hon. the Minister of Mines to grant assistance to necessitous dependants of the miners who lost their lives in the Kaitangata disaster.

21st September, 1927.

No. 115.—Petition of JOHN T. JOHNSON, of Waipori.

PRAYING that the Dunedin City Corporation Empowering Amendment Bill be not allowed to proceed until the matters in dispute between the petitioner and the Dunedin City Corporation concerning certain mining privileges at Waipori have been settled.

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

21st September, 1927.

No. 133.—Petition of JOHN T. JOHNSON, of Waipori.

PRAYING that the Dunedin City Corporation Empowering Amendment Bill be not allowed to proceed until the matters in dispute between the petitioner and the Dunedin City Corporation concerning certain mining privileges at Waipori have been settled; and, further, that a Commission be appointed to inquire into the matter of Waipori mining rights.

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

21st September, 1927.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER NO. 2.—REGULATIONS UNDER THE MINING ACT, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Goldfields and Mines Committee, to which was referred the above-mentioned parliamentary paper, has carefully considered and approved of the same.

21st September, 1927.

DUNEDIN CITY CORPORATION EMPOWERING AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee, to which was referred the above-mentioned Bill, has the honour to report that the said Bill has been carefully considered, and the Committee recommends that it be allowed to proceed, with amendments as shown on a copy of the Bill attached hereto.

21st September, 1927.

MINING AMENDMENT BILL.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Committee has carefully considered the above Bill, and recommends that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments shown on the copy of the Bill attached hereto.

1st November, 1927.

No. 286.—Petition of J. T. JOHNSON, of Waipori.

PRAYING that his claim for relief be referred to an independent tribunal.

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

1st November, 1927.

COAL-MINES AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee, to which was referred the above-mentioned Bill, has the honour to report that the said Bill has been carefully considered, and the Committee recommends that it be allowed to proceed, with amendments as shown on a copy of the Bill attached hereto.

15th November, 1927.

No. 335.—Petition of M. MUNCASTER, of Runanga.

PRAYING that she be granted a compassionate allowance in respect of services rendered the Mines Department by her late husband, William Muncaster.

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

29th November, 1927.

No. 259/25, Petition of JOHN T. JOHNSON, of Waipori, praying for an amendment of the Dunedin City Corporation Empowering Act, 1924, in respect of certain mining privileges; and No. 269/26, Petition of CHARLES A. MACDONALD and Another, of Waipori, praying that the Dunedin City Corporation Empowering Act, 1924, be so amended that the petitioners may have a right to recover compensation from the Dunedin City Corporation in respect of loss sustained arising out of the operation of the said Act.

I AM directed to report that the following members of the House of Representatives—namely, Mr. T. W. Rhodes, Mr. J. Horn, Mr. F. Waite, M.P., and Mr. W. E. Parry—during the past parliamentary recess visited the Waipori district with a view to ascertaining further evidence on the matters in issue in regard to the above petitions. Accompanied by Mr. A. H. Kimbell, Under-Secretary for Mines, members of the parliamentary party attended a meeting in the Town Hall at Dunedin on the 13th November, 1926 (Saturday), at which there were also present His Worship the Mayor of Dunedin, Mr. H. L. Tapley, C.M.G., M.P.; Councillor H. E. Shacklock; Mr. G. A. Lewin, Town Clerk; and the City Electrical Engineer. Mr. J. T. Johnson also attended.

Mr. T. W. Rhodes, M.P., explained briefly the objects the members of the parliamentary party had in view in investigating the matters mentioned in the petitions. Mr. Johnson spoke at great length in support of his case, and the Town Clerk replied to his remarks.

It was practically impossible to piece together in a tangible and clear manner what Mr. Johnson required to satisfy his claims, and he was therefore requested by Mr. Rhodes to prepare a statement in writing showing the value of the estimated losses suffered by him in consequence of the closing of the Waipori Goldfield. Later he wrote to the parliamentary party remarking on some of the statements that had been made by the Town Clerk, and enclosing a rough estimate of his loss, which he alleged amounted to £9,320, made up as follows:—

One year's litigation (self), at £10 per week	..	..	..	..	500
Two sons' wages as per sheets	..	..	..	..	450
One man extra	..	..	..	..	150
Carting and various (say)	..	..	..	..	100
Loss of profit, first year	..	..	..	..	1,500
Loss on subsequent two years at £3,000 per annum	..	..	..	..	6,000
					<u>£8,700</u>
Loss through non-possession—					£
Loss on road traffic and community rights (motor necessary)	..	..	..	..	250
Loss of time, &c. (say)	..	..	..	..	50
Loss on mountain camp	..	..	..	..	300
Loss on son's hut	..	..	..	..	20
					<u>£620</u>

On the following Monday, the 15th November, 1926, the parliamentary party motored to Waipori in company with His Worship the Mayor, Councillor Shacklock, the Town Clerk, and the Electrical Engineer, and on arrival were met by Messrs. Macdonald Bros. and Mr. Johnson. Mr. J. McC. Dickson, M.P., was also present, and spoke on behalf of the petitioners.

An opportunity was then given to the Macdonald Bros. to explain their case, to which the Town Clerk replied, and petitioners were questioned by members of the parliamentary party. Mr. Johnson then pointed out to the said members and others the mining operations already carried out and projected by himself, and by this means the party became fully seized of the position.

On Tuesday, the 16th November, 1926, the parliamentary party again assembled at the Town Hall. The claims of the Macdonald Bros. were further discussed frankly and fully, and it is pleasing to report that through its intervention a settlement was arrived at between Macdonald Bros. and His Worship the Mayor, under which the City Council of Dunedin undertook to pay the sum of £500 in full and final discharge of all claims that they may have against the said City Council in respect of the loss of the facilities provided by the Township of Waipori, and which said facilities have been or are likely to be destroyed by the exercise by the City Council of the powers given under the Dunedin City Corporation Empowering Act, 1924; such facilities to include, *inter alia*, the loss of access, the loss of store, post-office, telephone exchange, and school. The latter, while not yet closed, is likely to be closed in the near future.

Without prejudice to the generality of the provisions of the last preceding paragraph, the sum of £500 is to be treated as a full and complete discharge to the City Council of all claims, losses, and demands the said Charles Alexander Macdonald and the said Archibald Allan Macdonald have and may hereafter have in respect of all their losses, save and except any claim that they may have for land actually flooded or otherwise injuriously affected by the exercise of the power given to the City Council by the Dunedin City Corporation Empowering Act, 1924.

This left the case of Mr. Johnson to be further dealt with; and as a result of his lengthy further communications between the parties concerned, and with the assistance of the members of the parliamentary party, the following settlement was arrived at:—

"As the result of a conference at the Town Hall, Dunedin, on Tuesday, 16th November, 1926, between members of the House of Representatives and members of the Dunedin City Council with Mr. J. T. Johnson, the representatives of the City Council agreed to recommend Council to pay Mr. Johnson the sum of five hundred pounds (£500), hand him over the mining plant now on his claim, together with the pipes marked J. T. J. by him and now lying on Gare's working, on the condition that all mining operations by him in the Waipori watershed are to forthwith cease, and that the amalgamated claim now held by him on the Waipori Flat be surrendered; also that the existing lease of rights and plant from the Council be surrendered. We agree also to pay £100 for the mountain camp, and a further £15 for the son's hut. The essential part of this offer from the point of view of the City Council is that all mining by Mr. Johnson, either directly or indirectly, is to be absolutely stopped for all time."

It is to be regretted, however, that Mr. Johnson, after signing the above agreement, subsequently repudiated the amicable settlement arrived at. On the 24th November, 1926, he wrote to the Town Clerk that he would be lodging a further petition with the House of Representatives for a public inquiry into the whole of the Waipori transaction, especially in so far as it affects himself and his concerns.

As a result of the visit to the Waipori Goldfield the members of the parliamentary party are now in a very much better position to deal with any petitions that may be made by Mr. Johnson or other parties respecting mining privileges than would have been the case without the first-hand knowledge derived from such an inspection.

Members of the parliamentary party desire to place on record their appreciation of the very valuable assistance rendered by Mr. A. H. Kimbell, Under-Secretary for Mines, and also to thank the Dunedin City Council and its zealous officials for the many courtesies extended during the said visit.

Whereas the members of the parliamentary party aforesaid, after exhaustive inquiry into the subject-matter of the petition of John T. Johnson, were successful in bringing about an amicable settlement between the Dunedin City Corporation and the petitioner respecting certain mining privileges at Waipori, which Mr. Johnson subsequently repudiated, the Goldfields and Mines Committee has therefore no recommendation to make in regard to his petition.

And whereas, as a result of the intervention of the said parliamentary party, the matters in issue between Charles Alexander Macdonald and Archibald Allan Macdonald of the one part and the Dunedin City Corporation of the other part have been settled to the satisfaction of the said parties, the Goldfields and Mines Committee has therefore no recommendation to make in regard to the petition of C. A. Macdonald and another.

29th November, 1927.

SPECIAL REPORT.

I HAVE the honour to report that at a meeting of the Goldfields and Mines Committee held on Monday, the 28th November, 1927, the following resolution was unanimously agreed to, namely: The Goldfields and Mines Committee desires to place on record its cordial appreciation of the able manner in which Mr. George C. Black, Clerk of the Committee for the past four years, has during this session performed his duties; and the Committee further desires that this resolution be recorded in the minutes of the Committee, and also that it be reported to the House.

29th November, 1927.

SPECIAL REPORT.

I HAVE the honour to report that at a meeting of the Goldfields and Mines Committee held on Monday, the 28th November, 1927, the following resolution was unanimously agreed to, namely: That the members of the Goldfields and Mines Committee desire to record their personal appreciation of the ability and urbanity displayed during the session by Mr. T. W. Rhodes, M.P., as Chairman, in the conduct of the business of the Committee, and in facilitating the harmonious progress of their deliberations; and, further, that this resolution be recorded in the minutes of the Committee, and also that it be reported to the House.

29th November, 1927.

J. HORN,
Member of the Committee.

FINAL REPORT.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Goldfields and Mines Committee, consisting of ten members, has during the session held nine meetings, with an average attendance at each meeting of six members.

The Dunedin City Corporation Empowering Amendment Bill, the Mining Amendment Bill, the Coal-mines Amendment Bill, and Parliamentary Paper No. 2, "Regulations under the Mining Act, 1926," were referred to the Committee, and the same were carefully considered and reported upon to the House.

Nine petitions were also referred to the Committee, all of which were finally dealt with and reported upon to the House.

29th November, 1927.

T. W. RHODES, Chairman.

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