

delayed from various causes. Among them, the fact that the Native chiefs, Hon. Mr. Taiaroa and Mr. Tainui, were unable to attend the sitting of the Commission at either of the places named until after the close of the late session of Parliament. Also the fact that Mr. Izard, who has been engaged by them to prepare the evidence which is desired to lay before the Commission, was engaged in the Supreme Court at the time, and could not attend to their business.

At the joint request of Mr. Taiaroa and of his counsel, Mr. Izard, a postponement of the sitting at Akaroa and Dunedin until after Christmas was assented to by us. The 2nd of February proximo has been fixed for the sitting of the Commission at Akaroa, notice of which appears in the *Kahiti o Niu Tirenī*, No. 43, 10th December, 1879. And we are not aware of any cause of further delay in proceeding with the inquiry.

So far as we can see at present, we expect to adjourn from Akaroa and Dunedin about the 16th February. It is manifestly impossible for us to limit the time within which the inquiry intrusted to us may be brought to a close, but, so far as we are able to judge from the course Mr. Izard purposes to follow, in presenting the case of his clients, we do not anticipate protracted proceedings. We may add that, until the case, as put before us by him on behalf of the Natives interested, is completed, we shall not be in position to say what further evidence we may consider it necessary to obtain before we are able to report to His Excellency the Governor.

We have, &c.,

THOS. H. SMITH,  
F. E. NAIRN,  
Commissioners.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

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### Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

Mr. T. W. LEWIS to the COMMISSIONERS.

GENTLEMEN,—

Native Office, Wellington, 12th April, 1880.

I have the honor, by direction of the Hon. the Native Minister, to inform you that the sum voted for the expenses of the Middle Island Commission is approaching exhaustion, and Mr. Bryce feels that Parliament would not justify him, if he allowed the vote to be exceeded. I am to request you to be good enough to state whether he is right in supposing that there is little chance of the inquiry being completed and closed within the limits of the expenses prescribed by the Legislature. Mr. Bryce understands that you have just completed certain inquiries in the Middle Island, and would therefore suppose that a convenient stage had now being reached at which the inquiry might stop, until Parliament has determined whether an additional sum shall be devoted in continuance of the labours of the Commission. If the opinion above stated is correct, the Native Minister will feel it necessary to request that you will not incur any further expense in connection with your Commission, but will defer this request until he has your reply to this communication.

I have, &c.,

T. W. LEWIS,  
Under-Secretary.

The Middle Island Commissioners, Wellington.

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### Enclosure 4 in No. 1.

The COMMISSIONERS to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

Middle Island Native Land Purchase Commission,  
Wellington, 14th April, 1880.

SIR,—

We have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Under-Secretary Lewis's letter, quoted in the margin (No. 1610), informing us that the sum voted for the expenses of the Middle Island Commission is approaching exhaustion, requesting us to state our opinion as to whether the inquiry upon which we are engaged is likely to be completed and closed within the limits of the expenses prescribed by the Legislature, and suggesting that a convenient stage has been reached at which that inquiry might stop, until Parliament shall have determined whether an additional sum shall be devoted to its continuance.

In reply, we have the honor to state that in accepting our Commission we were not aware that any limits had been fixed within which the expenses of the Commission were to be kept; and, as we are not in a position to say that the limits to which Mr. Lewis's letter refers may not be exceeded, should we proceed with our inquiry, we feel that our proper course is to acquiesce in your proposal that the inquiry should stop at its present stage, and that further expense in connection with our Commission should not be incurred until an opportunity has been given for reference to Parliament on the subject.

In thus suspending the inquiry intrusted to us, we beg respectfully to express our view of the matter, that the responsibility of doing so rests wholly upon yourself. We understand that, failing an assurance from us that the sum voted by Parliament will not be exceeded, we shall be requested not to incur further expense in connection with the Commission. That assurance we are unable to give, and the alternative is forced upon us.

In pursuance of the course indicated, we shall now adjourn to Auckland, where we purpose collating the evidence already taken, and considering what further evidence may be required. Meanwhile we consider it necessary to retain the services of our secretary.

We have, &c.,

THOMAS H. SMITH,  
FRANCIS E. NAIRN,  
Commissioners.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.