

1883.
NEW ZEALAND.

EAST AND WEST COAST RAILWAY

(MIDDLE ISLAND).

CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING PROPOSED SURVEY, Etc.

Laid on the Table by the Hon. Major Atkinson, by leave of the House.

No. 1.

Mr. J. E. BROWN, M.H.R., to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

Wellington, 5th July, 1883.

I have the honour to forward resolutions passed this day at a meeting of Canterbury and Westland members, and to request that the Government will, at its earliest convenience, communicate its decision in writing to a deputation of members who will have the honour to wait upon the Government at time and place you may write me.

I have, &c.,

J. EVANS BROWN,
Chairman.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

Enclosure.

“THAT, in the opinion of this Meeting, it is advisable that the Government should proceed without delay with the detailed or working surveys, and estimates of cost of construction, of the lines of railway suggested to connect the East and West Coasts of the Middle Island, *via* Arthur's Pass, Hurunui Saddle, and the Cannibal Gorge.

“That, pending the completion of such surveys, and until the House shall have further considered and determined the question of railway communication between the East and West Coasts of the Middle Island, no portion of the £180,000 allocated to the extension of the main trunk line northward shall be expended, except for the purpose of constructing the railway to the Red Post.

“That Government should bring down a Bill to reserve from sale, and for the purpose of constructing such East and West Coast Railway, the land upon both sides of the above-named lines of railway for a distance of fifteen miles.

“That the construction of a line of railway to connect Canterbury with Marlborough, by the East Coast, is uncalled for, and calculated to prove burdensome to the Colony.”

No. 2.

The PREMIER to Mr. J. E. BROWN, M.H.R.

SIR,—

Government Buildings, Wellington, 6th July, 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, forwarding resolutions passed at a meeting of the Canterbury and Westland members, and requesting that the Government will, at its earliest convenience, communicate its decision in writing.

I have now to inform you, in reply—

1. That the Government are prepared, without delay, to cause such a survey to be made of the Arthur's Pass route as will enable them to place before Parliament at the next Session, a plan showing the route found to be the best, with an estimate of the cost of its construction, and also a report on the land on each side of the line.

2. The Government will also cause a like survey, with a like object, to be made for a line along a route to be determined on to connect Northern Canterbury with the West Coast.

3. In the meantime, the land for fifteen miles on each side of both lines will be reserved, so as to be available to be dealt with by Parliament in a future Session; but gold-mining will not in the meantime be interfered with.

4. The Government have no intention of asking during the present Session for any further appropriation than already appears on the Estimates out of the £180,000 (that being sufficient to carry the main trunk line to the Red Post), so that the remaining portion of the £180,000 shall be intact until dealt with by Parliament in a future Session.

5. The Government are not prepared at present to express any opinion on the subject of the last resolution, in reference to the Canterbury and Marlborough line.

J. Evans Brown, Esq., M.H.R.

I have, &c.,

FRED. WHITAKER.

No. 3.

Mr. J. E. BROWN, M.H.R. to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

Wellington, 26th July, 1883.

I have the honour to intimate to you that at a meeting this day, of Canterbury and Westland members, it was unanimously agreed to recommend the Government to have surveyed before next Session of Parliament the railway route from North Canterbury to West Coast, known as the Hurunui route, from Horseley Downs to Brunnerton.

I have, &c.,

J. EVANS BROWN,

Chairman.

Hon. F. Whitaker, Premier.

No. 4.

The PREMIER to Mr. J. E. BROWN, M.H.R.

SIR,—

Government Offices, Wellington, 27th July, 1883.

In reply to your letter of yesterday's date, with reference to the Railway between the East and West Coasts of the Southern Island, I have the honour to inform you that the Government accept the recommendation of the Canterbury and Westland Members, as conveyed by your letter; and will cause the Line suggested to be surveyed before the next Session of Parliament.

I have, &c.,

FRED. WHITAKER.

J. Evans Brown, Esq., M.H.R., Chairman, &c.