

1904.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS OF LANDS COMMITTEE.

(MR. A. W. HOGG, CHAIRMAN.)

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

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

THURSDAY, THE 30TH DAY OF JUNE, 1904.

Ordered, "That Standing Order No. 218 be suspended, and that a Committee, consisting of eighteen members, be appointed to consider all Bills and petitions that may be introduced into this House affecting the lands of the Crown, and to report generally upon the principles and provisions which they contain; the Committee to have power to call for persons, papers, and records; five to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Bennet, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Ell, Mr. Flatman, Mr. Graham, Mr. Hall, Mr. Harding, Mr. Hogg, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Lang, Mr. Laursen, Mr. Lawry, Mr. R. McKenzie, Mr. J. W. Thomson, Mr. Vile, Mr. Witty, Mr. Wood, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. DUNCAN.)

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REPORTS.

No. 26.—Petition of the WESTLAND COUNTY COUNCIL.

PETITIONERS pray that legislation be passed entitling local bodies to receive the royalties derived from the sales of timber and flax.

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

12th August, 1904.

No. 2.—Petition of MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL and 25 Others, as per Schedule attached.

PETITIONERS pray that legislation be passed entitling local bodies to receive a proportion of the royalties derived from the sales of timber and flax.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be forwarded to the Government for favourable consideration.

12th August, 1904.

SCHEDULE.

No. 3.—Wairau Road Board. „ 4.—Coromandel County Council. „ 5.—Thames County Council. „ 27.—Cook County Council. „ 28.—Wallace County Council. „ 37.—Woodville County Council. „ 46.—Whangaroa County Council. „ 47.—Patea County Council. „ 74.—Whangarei County Council. „ 75.—Rodney County Council. „ 85.—Inangahua County Council. „ 108.—Grey County Council. „ 109.—Manawatu County Council.		No. 110.—Waitotara County Council. „ 134.—Selwyn County Council. „ 135.—Mauriceville County Council. „ 181.—Bay of Islands County Council. „ 182.—Pohangina County Council. „ 183.—Hutt County Council. „ 197.—Southland County Council. „ 198.—Ashburton County Council. „ 199.—Kaikoura County Council. „ 200.—Waitaki County Council. „ 312.—Otamatea County Council. „ 313.—Masterton County Council.
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No. 7.—Petition of N. and E. S. PATERSON and 50 Others.

PETITIONERS pray for an amendment of the Public Works Act.

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

19th August, 1904.

Nos. 179, 230, 499, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, and 512.—Petitions of J. MALYON and Others, W. W. KERR and Others, L. S. FORD and Others, R. H. BOWMAN and Others, O. J. J. FISHER and Others, T. PENNYCUIK and Others, G. H. BEARD and Others, C. M. POWELL and Others, and J. A. KIRK and Others.

PETITIONERS pray for amendment of the Land Act so as to give them the option of acquiring the freehold of their sections.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petitions be referred to the Government.

26th August, 1904.

No. 408.—Petition of ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.

PETITIONER prays for compensation for loss of land through not being allowed to purchase the freehold.

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

26th August, 1904.

Nos. 130, 396, 428, 463, and 506.—Petitions of EKETAHUNA COUNTY COUNCIL, WAIPA COUNTY COUNCIL, LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL, TAURANGA COUNTY COUNCIL, and OPOTIKI COUNTY COUNCIL.

PETITIONERS pray that legislation be passed entitling local bodies to receive a proportion of the royalties derived from the sales of timber and flax.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petitions be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

26th August, 1904.

No. 175.—Petition of Sir W. L. BULLER.

PETITIONER prays for payment of costs incurred in the Horowhenua Block case.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be referred to the Public Petitions A to L Committee, by whom a similar petition has already been dealt with.

30th September, 1904.

No. 461.—Petition of J. M. DAVIDSON and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that the Crown pay rates on Crown and Native lands.

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

30th September, 1904.

Nos. 701, 702, and 703.—Petitions of C. WILSON and Others, R. GRIBBON and Others, and W. R. WRIGHT and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that a bridge be erected over the Mokau River, and that the main Auckland-Taranaki Road be deviated up the Awakino Valley.

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

30th September, 1904.

No. 489.—Petition of JOHN CHEYNE.

PETITIONER prays for the opening of a road or compensation.

I am directed to report that the Committee considers, as a road is shown on petitioner's title, the Lands and Survey Department should either provide him with the road or grant him reasonable compensation. The Committee therefore recommends that the petition be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

30th September, 1904.

No. 561.—Petition of GEORGE WINTER.

PETITIONER prays that the sum of £12, being a forfeited deposit on land, be refunded, as he was unable to complete the purchase within the time prescribed by law owing to illness.

I am directed to report that the Committee, being of opinion that the circumstances are exceptional, recommends that the amount claimed be placed on the supplementary estimates for the purpose of repaying the petitioner.

30th September, 1904.

No. 513.—Petition of J. R. WHITE and 8 Others (together with 15 other Petitions as per attached Schedule).

PETITIONERS pray that Crown tenants may have the option of acquiring the freehold of their sections.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petitions be forwarded to the Government.

30th September, 1904.

SCHEDULE.

No. 514.—Edwin Dugmore and 34 others.	No. 522.—Alexander Fleming and 17 others.
„ 515.—Henry Walsh and 2 others.	„ 523.—Samuel Atkinson and 12 others.
„ 516.—William Breeding and 10 others.	„ 524.—R. Forrest and 8 others.
„ 517.—Robert Graham Findlay and 12 others.	„ 525.—Matthew Boyd and 13 others.
„ 518.—John McLeay and 20 others.	„ 526.—T. H. Brown and 50 others.
„ 519.—J. C. Cooper and 11 others.	„ 527.—A. D. Bryant and 18 others.
„ 520.—F. S. Hall and 30 others.	„ 528.—A. F. Roadley and 38 others.
„ 521.—John Storey and 23 others.	

Nos. 529, 530, 531, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, and 645.—Petitions of G. B. WATT and Others, CHARLES CHITTOCK and Others, H. BUCKLAND and Others, H. E. DAVIS and Others, F. MILLER and Others, M. J. STEWART and Others, F. W. HAMMOND and Others, THOMAS MANSON and Others, F. BENSEMANN and Others, W. J. PETTIT and Others, GEORGE COSSAR and Others, PERCY F. WALL and Others, JOB BOND and Others, and JOHN DWYER and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that Crown tenants may have the option of purchasing the freehold of their sections.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petitions be referred to the Government.

30th September, 1904.

No. 425.—Petition of C. B. PRICE and Others.

PETITIONERS pray for a Commission to inquire into the drainage of Lake Ellesmere, and that Government will take steps to free their farms from the flood-water with which they are now inundated.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be referred to the Government with a strong recommendation that steps be taken to carry out the intention of "The Land Act, 1892" (section 107), dealing with the matter.

6th October, 1904.

No. 689.—Petition of ARTHUR McKEOWN.

PETITIONER prays that no legislation be passed to alter the system under which he now occupies land.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be referred to the Government.

6th October, 1904.

No. 554.—Petition of JAMES BISHOP.

PETITIONER prays for compensation for loss sustained by being turned out of his section.

I am directed to report that, after investigation, the Committee is assured the petitioner has suffered severe hardship, and recommends the petition be referred to the Government for most favourable consideration with a view to compensation.

6th October, 1904.

LAND BOARDS BILL.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred the Land Boards Bill, has the honour to report that, Parliament having decided to refer the subject to a Royal Commission, it has no recommendation to make.

6th October, 1904.

No. 758.—Petition of G. W. WILLIAMS and Others (together with 9 other similar Petitions, as per attached Schedule).

PETITIONERS pray that a referendum vote of the electors be taken on the questions that no more Crown lands be sold, and that the freehold of any lands leased from the Crown be not granted.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petitions be referred to the Government.

11th October, 1904.

SCHEDULE.

No. 777.—W. E. Lynn and others.	No. 824.—R. Ferguson and others.
„ 812.—A. H. Cooper and others.	„ 825.—M. Moloney and others.
„ 813.—E. Jones and others.	„ 826.—C. E. Hopkins and others.
„ 822.—Rose C. Atkinson and others.	„ 827.—J. A. McCullough and others.
„ 823.—James Lindear and others.	

No. 713.—Petition of W. KERSHAW and 21 Others.

PETITIONERS pray that Crown tenants may have the option of purchasing the freehold of their sections.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be referred to the Government.

11th October, 1904.

No. 811.—Petition of JOHN GRAY and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that a sum of £600 be granted out of the timber royalties for expenditure on the Towai-Waiotu Road to repair damage done to said road by cartage of timber.

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

11th October, 1904.

No. 753.—Petition of BASIL HEWETT and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that legislation be passed entitling local bodies to receive a proportion of the royalties derived from the sales of timber and flax.

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

11th October, 1904.

Nos. 737 and 738.—Petitions of J. F. EUSTACE and Others and T. MCKENZIE and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that lessees under the West Coast Settlement Reserves Act may have the option of purchasing the freehold of their holdings.

I am directed to report that the Committee has no recommendation to make.—(Appendix I.-5A.)
13th October, 1904.

No. 742.—Petition of J. B. BLAINE.

PETITIONER prays for an issue of Crown grants for lands given to landless Natives in the South Island.

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

13th October, 1904.

No. 800.—Petition of DANIEL CROWLEY and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that an area of 5,000 acres of unimproved Native land adjoining the Ohutu Improved-farm Settlement be acquired and utilised for dairy farms.

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

13th October, 1904.

No. 883.—Petition of JAMES HOLLAND, Kaiapoi.

PETITIONER asks for compensation for mistake made in survey of his land.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be referred to the Government, with a recommendation that the claim of the petitioner be dealt with.

25th October, 1904.

No. 842.—Petition of JOSEPH POLGLASE, Mangatainoka.

PETITIONER asks for compensation for loss sustained on account of error made by Lands Department.

I am directed to report that, as the Lands Department appears to have misled the petitioner, the Committee recommends that the prayer of his petition be granted.

25th October, 1904.

No. 568.—Petition of FRANCES CAMPBELL TULLY and 4 Others.

PETITIONERS pray for a lease of certain lands.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be forwarded to the Government.

28th October, 1904.

No. 450, 1903.—Petition of ROBERT MACKIE.

PETITIONER prays for relief from the forfeiture of land at Te Aroha.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be forwarded to the Government, with a recommendation that it be referred to the Auckland Land Board for further inquiry and consideration.

28th October, 1904.

No. 888.—Petition of ANN RICHARDSON.

PETITIONER prays for a grant of a section of land at Papakura, Auckland.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be referred to the Government, with a recommendation that a copy of the report of the Under-Secretary, Crown Lands, to the Lands Committee, dated the 21st October instant, be sent to the petitioner.

28th October, 1904.

No. 729.—Petition of JAMES HENDERSON and 16 Others.

PETITIONERS pray for an inquiry into the management of the lands under the jurisdiction of the Otago School Commissioners.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends the petition be referred to the Government.

28th October, 1904.

No. 890.—Petition of JOHN W. KNIGHT and 676 Others.

PETITIONERS pray that the recommendation of the Hawke's Bay Land Board, with reference to Mr. C. Hansen's lease of land at Motu, be given effect to.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that, as far as the Land Act will allow, effect be given to the recommendation of the Hawke's Bay Land Board.
28th October, 1904.

No. 734.—Petition of R. JOHNSTONE, Jun., and 186 Others.

PETITIONERS pray that certain runs in Central Otago be cut up for close settlement.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends the prayer of the petition be granted.
28th October, 1904.

No. 733.—Petition of R. JOHNSTONE, Jun., and 208 Others.

PETITIONERS pray that no extension of lease be granted to certain pastoral-lease holders.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the expediency of subdividing runs and converting them into moderate-sized holdings, as urged by the petitioners, be inquired into by the Government.

28th October, 1904.

No. 759.—Petition of MICHAEL COGAN and 442 Others.

PETITIONERS pray that Linburn and Puketoi Runs be forthwith subdivided.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the prayer of the petition be granted.

28th October, 1904.

No. 895.—Petition of JOHN PURDIE and 16 Others.

PETITIONERS pray that the original site for the proposed Awakino Bridge be adhered to, as being more convenient for settlement and travellers than the suggested alteration.

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

28th October, 1904.

No. 885.—Petition of C. F. WATKINS.

PETITIONER prays for assistance, owing to loss of sheep and grain.

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

28th October, 1904.

Nos. 880, 881, 882, and 901.—Petitions of G. HAGGIE and Others, A. McCLUGGAGE and Others, NEW PLYMOUTH HARBOUR BOARD, and STRATFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

PETITIONERS pray that Crown tenants be granted the right of acquiring freehold.

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

28th October, 1904.

No. 91.—Petition of H. A. and D. O'SHEA.

PETITIONERS pray for amendment of "The Rotokare Domain Act Repeal Act, 1903," or compensation for loss of lease, amounting to £673.

I am directed to report that, as "The Rotokare Domain Act Repeal Act, 1903," makes no provision for the principal items claimed by petitioners, and in the absence of anything to prove that the estimate of the work done furnished by the Commissioner of Crown Lands is unfair or inadequate, your Committee is unable to make any recommendation.

2nd November, 1904.

No. 207.—Petition of JOHN WALSH.

PETITIONER prays for an amendment of "The Rotokare Domain Act Repeal Act, 1903," or for compensation for the loss of his lease, amounting to £563.

Your Committee, having made inquiry and taken evidence in regard to this petition, reports as follows: Under "The Rotokare Domain Act Repeal Act, 1903," the Rotokare Domain passed from the control of the Hawera Borough Council and came under the control of the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the Taranaki District. The Act provides that all leases and agreements made by the Hawera Borough Council under "The Rotokare Domain Act, 1899," are revoked and cancelled, but specifies that the holder of any valid lease or agreement shall be entitled to such compensation (not exceeding twice the amount actually expended by him on improvements under his lease or agreement) "as may be agreed upon between such holder and the Minister of Lands, or, in default of agreement, as may be assessed under 'The Public Works Act, 1894,' as in the

case of land taken by the Governor for a public work." The Commissioner of Crown Lands has had the improvements effected by petitioner valued, and £29—being double the amount estimated—has been tendered and refused. The claim of the petitioner appears to be not so much for actual loss of money as his estimated gain through having made a good investment. The evidence is conflicting and unsatisfactory, and fails to establish the allegations in the petition. The Repeal Act makes no provision for the principal items claimed by the petitioner, and in the absence of anything to prove that the estimate of the work done furnished by the Commissioner of Crown Lands is unfair or inadequate your Committee is unable to make any recommendation.—(Appendix I.—5b.)

2nd November, 1904.

No. 372.—Petition of C. G. DALGETY and Others, of Otago and Canterbury.

PETITIONERS pray for the passing of a measure similar to "The Pastoral Tenants' Relief Act, 1895," on account of losses of sheep from unprecedented falls of snow.

I am directed to report that the Committee have inquired into statements contained in the petition, and have taken evidence thereon, which they now report to the House. They find that on the date mentioned there was a severe snowstorm, which resulted in a heavy loss of stock in certain parts of Otago and Canterbury. The evidence, however, shows that, apart from the storm in question, a number of causes have contributed to the serious reduction that of late years is said to have occurred in the stock-carrying capacity of certain pastoral runs; and that the managers of these properties believe an extension of existing leases with better security for improvements would encourage and facilitate the adoption of remedial measures. It is contended that the terms and conditions under which the land is held are of such a nature as to discourage, if not prevent, steps being taken that would secure stock against exceptional stress of weather, and improve the value of the pastures. The conclusion seems therefore unavoidable that, owing to the reluctance of these runholders to invest sufficient capital on improvements for which they might not be fully recouped when their leases terminate, the properties are not efficiently worked. The concession applied for does not appear to be so much a remission of rent as an extension of the term of the leases and increased compensation for improvements at the end of the term. Opposed to such a concession is the policy of land-settlement. Numerous signed memorials indicate that if the larger runs that are suitable for the purpose were subdivided into moderate-sized holdings they would be eagerly taken up and made much more productive than at present. The question must therefore be determined whether, in the interests of the State, it is desirable that the sufferers by the snowstorm referred to in the petition should receive an extension of the term of their leases or increased security of tenure as compensation for their losses, or if their leases should be allowed to expire in due course, so that the State may be free to give effect, where it is considered necessary, to the demand for subdivision and closer settlement. Your Committee, after weighing carefully the evidence and taking the circumstances surrounding the prayer of the petitioners into consideration, do not feel justified in recommending legislation that may have the effect of locking up land that is being improved with public works from an influx of settlers. While expressing sympathy with the petitioners on account of the losses they have sustained, they are unable to recommend any special form of relief beyond what may be allowed if the powers of the Land Boards are extended. They recommend that the Boards be asked to formulate a scheme that will have the effect of giving them more power to deal with the land upon such terms as they think advisable in the interests of the State and the occupiers, but that such provision should be subject to the approval of the Minister of Lands.—(Appendix I.—5c.)

2nd November, 1904.

No. 760.—Petition of WILLIAM GLEESON and 55 Others.

PETITIONERS pray for remission of rent for a number of years on account of severe losses caused by excessive rain and floods.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be referred to the Government.

2nd November, 1904.

No. 828.—Petition of G. DONALDSON and 6 Others.

PETITIONERS, who are pastoral tenants of the Crown, pray for relief on account of losses of stock through snowstorm of 1903 and other causes.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petition be referred to the Government.

2nd November, 1904.

No. 829.—Petition of T. G. LOVE and 30 Others (and 49 similar Petitions, *vide* Schedule attached).

PETITIONERS pray that a referendum vote of the electors be taken on the following proposals: (1.) That no more Crown lands be sold. (2.) That the freehold of any lands leased from the State be not granted.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends that the petitions be referred to the Government.

4th November, 1904.

SCHEDULE.

No. 830.—N. Orton and 30 others.	No. 874.—A. Walker and 136 others.
" 832.—R. McLroy and 25 others.	" 875.—J. G. Knight and 31 others.
" 834.—G. Gillies and 30 others.	" 876.—G. A. Smart and 26 others.
" 835.—J. T. Brady and 30 others.	" 877.—W. T. McKay and 15 others.
" 837.—Alexander Reese and 31 others.	" 886.—E. Adams and 30 others.
" 838.—Joseph Dawson and 32 others.	" 887.—C. M. Hansen and 19 others.
" 839.—W. H. Seed and 14 others.	" 891.—George Yemm and 9 others.
" 840.—William Overend and 31 others.	" 892.—N. B. Kivell and 22 others.
" 841.—John Ayson and 22 others.	" 896.—W. Rogers and 32 others.
" 845.—W. H. Redway and 53 others.	" 897.—John Fawcus and 30 others.
" 846.—J. M. Dawson and 30 others.	" 898.—E. E. Partington and 32 others.
" 847.—Charles Smith and 14 others.	" 899.—W. S. Smith and 19 others.
" 848.—D. McGregor and 14 others.	" 903.—E. Perry and 30 others.
" 849.—A. Foster and 30 others.	" 910.—J. Brown and 30 others.
" 851.—Richard Piper and 30 others.	" 911.—John Fisher and 22 others.
" 852.—P. E. Nolan and 132 others.	" 912.—J. Ward and 54 others.
" 853.—John Scott and 33 others.	" 920.—B. R. McLaren and 30 others.
" 854.—D. Lumsden and 50 others.	" 923.—F. Heslin and 61 others.
" 855.—A. McKeeney and 30 others.	" 934.—A. H. Hobbs and 26 others.
" 861.—G. Stevenson and 14 others.	" 941.—L. Percy and 8 others.
" 862.—J. A. Revall and 30 others.	" 942.—W. H. Rhys and 31 others.
" 863.—E. A. M. Leaver and 20 others.	" 943.—S. Rawnsley and 29 others.
" 864.—J. Crawford and 88 others.	" 944.—T. Robinson and 26 others.
" 865.—John Foster and 374 others.	" 948.—R. Bradley and 19 others.
" 866.—J. C. Stevens and 32 others.	

Nos. 905, 906, and 907.—Petitions of MARTIN WILSON and 5 Others, HORATIO EVERETT and 39 Others, and ALBERT ASKEW and 107 Others, Motueka, Nelson.

PETITIONERS pray for valuation for improvements and fair rent on land leased from the Nelson College Board of Governors.

I am directed to report that the Committee is of opinion that, within reasonable limits, compensation for improvements should be allowed all occupiers of public reserves and endowments, and recommends the prayer of the petition to the favourable consideration of the Government.

4th November, 1904.

No. 940.—Petition of E. JAMIESON and 27 Others, Ohura Valley.

PETITIONERS pray for relief on account of being charged a year's rent, and rates on surveyed roads, though they had barely a month's occupancy of their bush sections.

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

4th November, 1904.

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