

Mr. Allen put in the following minority dissent or report, and asked that it be placed on record and form part of the report:—

“Re *Te Akau*.”

“25th November, 1910.

“We dissent from the finding, because, in our opinion, it should have been stated in the finding (a) that Mr Kaihau did agree with the Natives to conduct the sale to the Government of the Te Akau Block, (b) that Mr Kaihau did receive from the vendors the sum of £2,000, which included commission for the sale of the Te Akau Block; (c) that Mr Kaihau’s action was in direct contravention of a resolution of the House agreed to on the 14th July, 1886.

“W F. MASSEY

“J ALLEN.

“W FRASER.

“W C. BUCHANAN.”

On a point of order being raised objecting to same being recorded, the Chairman ruled that a minority dissent or report might be put in.

Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward and Hon. Mr. Millar wished to record their protest against the Chairman’s ruling

Mr. Myers gave notice of motion to move at a later period, “Referring to the third charge against Mr. Symes, the Committee desires to express its opinion that it is a matter of regret that a confidential communication written by Mr. Walter Symes to Mr. McCluggage, which by universal custom is always treated as private, should have been ignored and made public by those into whose hands the letter passed.”

Resolved, on the motion of the Hon. Mr. Millar, That, the hour of 1 p.m. having arrived, the Committee do now adjourn, and that the Chairman ask leave from the House to sit again at 4 p.m. this afternoon.

The Committee adjourned accordingly

The Committee resumed at 4 p.m.

The Chairman stated that he had consulted the Speaker and authorities on the point, and he now reversed his ruling *re* the dissenting minority report put in by Mr. Allen *re* Te Akau, and ordered the same to be struck out of the report.

Resolved, on the motion of the Chairman, to proceed with allegation No. 7

The Chairman’s draft report, with a statement of the evidence, and his finding as Chairman, reads as follows:—

FLAXBOURNE CHARGE.

The Select Committee to which was referred the charges against the Government by the honourable member for Stratford, Mr. Hine, in connection with the purchase by the Government of the Flaxbourne Estate for closer settlement, has to report as follows:—

1 The charge is against the Government of which the late Right Honourable Mr. Seddon was Prime Minister, and is as follows:—

“That in or about the year 1904 the Government, having taken steps to acquire compulsorily the property known as the Flaxbourne Estate, and appointed a member of the Legislature—to wit, Thomas Kennedy Macdonald, a member of the Legislative Council—as their assessor, and knowing or believing that by reason of his being a member of the Legislature the said Thomas Kennedy Macdonald could not be paid any remuneration for so acting as assessor, sent the then partner of the said Thomas Kennedy Macdonald, one Alexander Lorimer Wilson, to make a casual inspection of the said property and paid him an exceptional and wholly extravagant fee therefor, with the intent or object of indirectly remunerating the said Thomas Kennedy Macdonald or his partner or firm for the services of the said Thomas Kennedy Macdonald as such assessor as aforesaid.”

2 At the hearing Mr. M. Myers appeared as counsel for Mr. Hine, and Mr. C. P. Skerrett, K.C. (with him Mr. Sharp) watched the proceedings on behalf of the Hon. Mr. T. K. Macdonald.

3. The evidence taken at length shows,—

(a.) That in the year 1903 (the late Right Hon. Mr. Seddon being then Minister in Charge of the Land Purchase Department) the Seddon Government took steps to acquire compulsorily the Flaxbourne Estate, situated in Marlborough, containing 56,000 acres, and proceedings in the Compensation Court were taken to determine the claim of the owners to the sum of £410,000 as compensation for the taking of the estate, and the right of the owners to reserve out of the estate a certain area. The Hon. T. K. Macdonald, M.L.C., was appointed assessor for the Crown

(b.) In December, 1903, Mr. A. L. Wilson (who was a land and estate agent and land-valuer, carrying on business in Wellington in copartnership with the Hon. T. K. Macdonald) was instructed to proceed to Flaxbourne to inspect the estate, and to make a confidential report on the character and value of the Flaxbourne Estate, and to confer and advise with Messrs. Findlay, Dalziel, and Co., the solicitors for the Crown, thereon, and as to the witnesses which it was desirable to call, and generally to assist such solicitors by his advice.