

The suggestion of Mr. Vaile that the Committee should visit the pumice area before coming to a decision was discussed by the Committee.

On motion of Mr. Makitanara, it was resolved, That as the session is nearing the end the Committee regret that time will not permit opportunity to visit the Rotorua-Taupo area.

Mr. Jenkins moved, That the Committee report the following resolution to the House :—

“That the Committee, having heard the evidence of a considerable number of settlers and other representatives of the Railway, Lands, Agriculture, and Prisons Departments, is of the opinion that the action of the Government in discontinuing the Rotorua-Taupo Railway was thoroughly justified, and that the said railway should not be continued, and that in regard to the prayer of the petitioners the Committee recommend that no action be taken. The Committee is also of opinion that the Government should consider the putting into operation of an exhaustive experimental test on a limited area of, say, 10,000 acres of better-class pumice land, to be brought into permanent pasture on the principle of mass employment.”

The following members spoke to the motion : Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Makitanara, Hon. Mr. Ransom, Mr. Kyle, Mr. Samuel, Mr. Massey, Mr. Semple, Mr. Lye, Rev. Clyde Carr.

It was suggested that, as members of the Committee wanted time to review the evidence, the Committee defer consideration of the petition ; and after discussing the suggestion it was unanimously decided on the voices to postpone further consideration until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 15th October, 1929, to which date and time the Committee adjourned at 11.55 a.m.

TUESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 1929.

The Committee met pursuant to notice at 10 a.m.

Present : Colonel McDonald (Chairman), Rev. Clyde Carr, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Kyle, Mr. Lye, Mr. Makitanara, Mr. Massey, Mr. Samuel, Mr. Semple, Hon. Mr. Ransom.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Committee commenced further deliberations as agreed to.

Mr. Semple moved the following amendment to the previous motion of Mr. Jenkins :—

“That this Committee, in view of the recommendations made in 1920 and 1921 by the Public Petitions Committee, and in 1920 by the Taupo Tramways and Timber Commission endorsed by the Royal Commission on the Rotorua-Taupo Railway together with evidence submitted to the Committee as to the actual and possible settlement on the lands within reasonable proximity to the proposed railway, is of the opinion that though the present Government may have been justified in temporarily suspending operations, that a full and complete experimental development should be made of an area of the said land sufficiently large to determine whether the soil can be economically and profitably exploited, and therefore recommends that the Government immediately provide for the settlement of at least 50,000 acres of land on a group-settlement basis, and that the building of the railway be determined by the success or otherwise of such settlement.”

The following members of the Committee spoke to the amendment : Mr. Semple, Hon. Mr. Ransom, Rev. Clyde Carr, Mr. Samuel, Mr. Kyle, Mr. Lye, Mr. Jenkins, and Colonel McDonald.

On the amendment being put, the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follow : Ayes—Mr. Semple, Mr. Massey, Mr. Kyle, Mr. Samuel, Rev. Clyde Carr ; Noes—Hon. Mr. Ransom, Colonel McDonald, Mr. Lye, Mr. Makitanara, and Mr. Jenkins.

And the voting being even, the Chairman gave his casting-vote against the amendment ; so it passed in the negative.

The original motion was then put, and the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follows : Ayes—Colonel McDonald, Hon. Mr. Ransom, Mr. Makitanara, Mr. Lye, and Mr. Jenkins ; Noes—Mr. Semple, Mr. Massey, Mr. Kyle, Mr. Samuel, Rev. Clyde Carr.

And the voting being even, the Chairman gave his casting-vote in favour of the Ayes ; so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Discussion took place *re* the letter of Mr. Parsons, and it was decided that no action should be taken by the Committee.

On motion of Mr. Samuel, it was resolved, That the Chairman report the finding of the Committee to the House, with a recommendation that the report, together with the minutes of proceedings and copy of evidence taken, be laid upon the table of the House and be printed.

The Committee then adjourned.

THURSDAY, 17TH OCTOBER, 1929.

The Committee met pursuant to notice at 10 a.m.

Present : Colonel McDonald (Chairman), Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Kyle, Mr. Massey, Mr. Samuel, Rev. Clyde Carr, Mr. Lye, Mr. Makitanara, Hon. Mr. Ransom.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Discussion took place on the difficulty of printing Exhibit 1, handed in by Mr. Martin.

On motion of Colonel McDonald, it was resolved, That the Clerk make a summary of Exhibit 1, as handed in by Mr. Martin, on the petition of E. E. Vaile and others.

The Committee then adjourned.