

*Royal Commission to Inquire into and Report as to Grievances alleged by Maoris with regard to certain Lands at Orakei, in the City of Auckland.*

GEORGE THE SIXTH, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India :

To our trusty and loving subject : THE HONOURABLE ROBERT KENNEDY, a Judge of the Supreme Court of New Zealand : GREETING.

WHEREAS petitions have been presented to Parliament by certain Maoris resident at Orakei in the City of Auckland and elsewhere praying for the return to the Maoris of the subdivisions of Orakei No. 1 Reserve Block which have been purchased by the Crown from the Native owners and for the return to the Maoris of Lots 1, 2, and 3 on Plan No. 1330P, deposited in the office of the Chief Surveyor at Auckland, which said lots were purchased by the Crown from the General Trust Board of the Diocese of Auckland :

And whereas the claims and allegations made by the petitioners in the said petitions were referred to the Native Land Court for inquiry and report pursuant to the provisions of section 50 of the Native Land Amendment and Native Land Claims Adjustment Act, 1928 :

And whereas the report and recommendation of the Native Land Court and of the Chief Judge thereof under the said section 50 were in due course laid before Parliament as in the said section provided but for divers reasons no action thereon was taken to grant the prayers of the said petitions :

And whereas the Government has decided that it cannot, on the facts as at present appearing, grant the prayers of the said petitions, but has decided to cause further inquiry to be made into the matters referred to in the said petitions as hereinafter provided :

Now, therefore, we, taking into consideration your impartiality, integrity, and ability, do hereby constitute and appoint you the said

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to be a Commission to inquire into and report upon the following matters :—

1. Whether the Crown by its purchase of individual interests in the land known as Orakei No. 1 Reserve Block, being the whole of the land comprised and described in a partition order of the Native Land Court dated the 10th day of January, 1898, and/or in any of the subdivisions of the said block and by the subsequent proclamation of any subdivision of such land as Crown land obtained a good and valid title to such parcels of the said land or individual interests therein as had been purchased, freed and discharged from all right, title, and interest of the Native vendors :

2. Whether there was anything contained in section 373 of the Native Land Act, 1909 (re-enacted in section 453 of the Native Land Act, 1931), which prevented the Native Land Purchase Board from lawfully purchasing the said land or any interests therein or which rendered any such purchases when made invalid :

3. Whether there were at the time such purchases were made any valid reasons why the Crown should have abstained from purchasing the interests of those owners of the said land who were agreeable to sell, and did sell, their interests to the Crown :

4. Whether the Crown has paid to those Native vendors those interests it purchased a fair and reasonable price for those interests having regard to the value of the said land at the date of the purchase of such interests :

5. Whether the purchase-money agreed to be paid in respect of those interests purchased by the Crown in the said land has been duly paid to the Native vendors :

6. Whether the Natives now occupying portions of the Orakei No. 1 Reserve Block subdivisions purchased by the Crown as aforesaid have any right or justification for continuing to occupy the said land or any part or parts thereof and for refusing to vacate the said land or any part or parts thereof in order that the Crown may obtain vacant possession of the same :

7. Whether any promises were made or held out by any official or agent of the Crown to the Native vendors of any portion of the Orakei Block that, in consideration of their selling their interests in the Orakei Block elsewhere than in Orakei No. 1 Reserve (the Papakainga Block), the Crown would not purchase the interests of the Natives in the said Orakei No. 1 Reserve (Papakainga Block), and, if any such promises were made or held out by the Crown's officials or agents, whether such promises were made or held out with the authority of the Crown, and whether the Crown was bound thereby either morally or legally :