

with the sale, Sir William Martin exclaims, "on such *evidence* as the above the Government was "prepared to *assert a title* to the Block." It will hereafter be fully shewn that the position of the Government, properly understood, is not that of "asserting a title to the Block." The purpose of the present observations is, to point out that Mr. Richmond's Memorandum expressly rests its conclusion *upon authority*, and by no means pretends to go into the *evidence* of title. "The question of "Title," says the Memorandum, "is one on which persons not versed in the intricacies of Native "usage cannot expect to form an independent judgment. It is a question to be determined *upon* "authority."

85. A single item of what the Memorandum properly calls *testimony*, is adduced; namely, the letter of Wi Tako, a Ngatiawa Chief, whose evidence is represented as carrying "great weight," "as his prepossessions are adverse to the British Government." The letter in question was written by Wi Tako to the Waikato Chiefs, from New Plymouth, at which place he stopped on his return South from a Maori King meeting in the Waikato country. It seems he had been asked by Waikato to report upon the merits of the Waitara question.

86. The translation of the letter appended to the Memorandum is as follows:—

"Waitoki, Taranaki, April 10th, 1860.

"This is my message to Waikato, that Waikato may understand the character of this foolish "work at Taranaki. I arrived here and have ascertained the causes of this war. Enough of this.

"Another word. My message is to Tikaokao Chief of Tongaporutu, to Te Wetini Chief of "Tarariki, to Takerei of the Kauri, to Hikaka of Papatea, to Reihana of Whataroa, to Te Wetini of "Hangatiki, to Eruera of Mohapaonui, to Te Paetai of Huitrangiora, to Heuheu of Taupo, to Paerata "of the Papa, to Te Ati of Arohena, to Epiha of Kihikihi, to Ihaia of Hairini, to Hoani of Rangia- "whia, and Hori te Waru, to Tamihana of Tamahere, to Rewi at Ngaruawhia—to all of you. You "requested me to investigate the subject and send you the truth, which is this. Friends, *this wrong* "is *William King's*. *Another wrong has been committed by Taranaki greater than all the evils* "that have been done in the land. Let your thoughts be true to the words (or pledges) given to me "by you, and which we consider to be right. Friends, the work that you have to do is that which "is right and that only. Don't you look towards the foolish works of this land. Friends, listen to "me—former days were days of error, the days that succeeded were days of truth; let this be your only "work, to obey the word of the Great Father in Heaven, which is a line that has one end above and "the other reaching down to the earth. That is the fighting for us: be true to your agreement with "me.

"Friends listen to me. The cause of the war is only the land. Not the King. Let not the "evil spirit lead you into temptation.

"From your loving friend in the Lord,

"From WI TAKO NGATATA."

87. Sir William Martin contends that the word '*he*' in Wi Tako's letter should be rendered 'trouble,' not 'wrong,' as in the translation appended to the Memorandum. This must appear a strained construction to any one who observes, that William King's act (this wrong of William King's) is coupled in the letter with mention of *another wrong* ('*tetahi he*') done by the Taranakis, i. e. with the murder of the defenceless settlers and boys at Omata, which last he describes as greater than all the evils of the world. Wi Tako undoubtedly intended to condemn (*whaka-he*) the Taranakis, and it plainly follows that his mention of King's proceeding also was meant to be condemnatory.

88. Wi Tako's language was understood by natives who read it to express condemnation of William King. At the meeting at Ngaruawahia, Paora Tuheere addressing the Waikato Chiefs says, "You say that you have not seen wrong on the part of Te Rangitake (Kingi). I have seen his wrong doing. Letters have reached you that convict him of wrong. Yet you say you have not seen it. I repeat I have seen it and I believe there is not a Chief in Waikato that is not convinced that Te Rangitake is wrong. I have seen Wi Tako's letter addressed to you all, and that letter set my mind at rest on the subject. You have all seen that letter, and its statements should settle the question" (69A). It does not appear that the interpretation of Wi Tako's letter was called in question at the meeting. The letter was printed and widely circulated among the natives, and was understood by them as unequivocally censuring William King's proceedings.

89. Wi Tako's testimony was only valuable as proceeding from the opponents of the Government. It appears that on reaching the South he was talked over by the Native or European supporters of King. This was quite to be expected. His altered sentiments have nothing whatever to do with the interpretation of the letter written by him from New Plymouth. What passed at the interview with Dr. Featherston, by no means bears out Sir William Martin's assertion that "the interpretation adopted by Mr. Richmond was expressly repudiated by Wi Tako." The Natives, Te Puni, Wi Tako, and others, who answered Dr. Featherston's question, were not giving an opinion as to the meaning of what Wi Tako had previously written, but were declaring what they themselves then thought, or pretended to think, upon the question of the quarrel with Kingi. Nothing is proved but that Wi Tako contradicted himself.

90. It is curious to compare Sir William Martin's translation of the word "*he*" in Wi Tako's letter with the rendering of the same word in passages of other letters printed in his pamphlet, where it is used to impute *wrong-doing* to Mr. Parris and Te Teira; passages, for instance, in the letters of Hohepa Ngapaki and others, in Ritatona's letter of 5th December, 1859, and in Riwai Te Ahu's, of 23rd June, 1860. It would almost seem as if the force of the word varied in Sir W. Martin's mind, according to the person in connexion with whom it is used, and that what is only "*trouble*" in Kingi's case is "*wrong*" in that of his opponents.

(69A) Rev. T. Buddle, Pamphlet on Maori King Movement p. 51.