

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

Ngatihikairo, north side of the Kawhia not exceeding.....	80	
Ngatiapakura ditto	120	200
Ngatimaniapoto, south side of Kawhia, from 400 to.....	500	
Ngatimahuta ditto not exceeding.....	300	800
		<u>1000</u>

N.B. Ngatiapakura took no part in the proceedings and expressed no feeling one way or other as to the Ture, &c.

Mr. Schnackenburg informed me that the Ngatimaniapoto and Ngatimahuta had not been invited by the Ngatihikairo to this meeting; that they did not know of my visit here or would have sent a deputation to see me. He wished to know if I would go and see them if invited; replied that my engagements at Raglan would not permit me, but should be glad to see any of them on Monday morning and would convey to His Excellency any wishes they might express to me. Explained also that if these two tribes wished for the institutions they must meet in Runanga and discuss the matter and send their decision in writing to His Excellency; if unanimous I felt sure that either myself or some other officer of Government would be sent to see them on the subject as His Excellency was desirous of extending these institutions over the whole Island.

Mr. Schnackenburg also informed me that these tribes were much annoyed with the Ngatihikairo for deserting them, as they considered the latter tribe had been the sole cause of their joining the king party.

A procession of about 50 males (chiefly boys and young men) and 50 women and girls of the Patupo and king people of Aotea marched across the bay and proceeded to the opposite hill, walked round the king's flag, which was then lowered half mast high, and then returned.

Ngatihikairo then assembled on the same hill, their women uttering their usual lamentations over a dead body at the foot of the king's flag; and suddenly started up as in affright and ran away to some distance from the flag. The males of this tribe, about 40 in number, in full war costume, with muskets and cartouch boxes, then walked round the flag, retired a little distance and danced the war dance, fired two volleys, first at the flag, and then to the Southward in the Taranaki direction; the whip was then lowered and not hoisted again during the day. The armed party returned to our side of the bay, and the ceremony of throwing the spear was performed by our party; the signification of this latter being that our party welcomed them as having joined us; the armed party then repeated the war dance in front of the Patupo and Aotea king party, their women following suit with horrible grimaces. Speeches between these two parties followed. The ensign and our flag "Mahia te pai" were then hoisted.

When I afterwards found that more than three fourths of the tribe publicly declined to accept the institutions, I felt I had no other alternative than to decline establishing a Runanga here, and accordingly instructed Waata Kukutai to state this. He tried to mollify Tapihana's party by offering them the appointment of Assessor, but of no avail.

I feel quite at a loss to account for the extraordinarily inconsistent conduct of Tapihana and his party; the ceremony before described in reference to the king flag was considered by all our party as a total abandonment of the King; in fact the flag was buried, and they were as much surprised as I was at their refusing the Ture. I can only give two conjectures as to the cause of this conduct.

First, and the most probable one, that Ngatihikairo were concerned in some of the murders of Europeans at Taranaki, and are afraid of the consequences, and of the laws being used as an instrument for their apprehension; they were innocent with respect to the boys first murdered, as they were not at Taranaki then, but have been privately informed that it was some of their tribe who shot a man called Coade on the Taranaki beach, when he was proceeding with provisions to the wreck of the "Sea Gull" vessel. Hone Wetere, when once asked by my informant if it was a certain person, replied, no, it was——.

Tapihana's repeated allusion to his "ringa toto" (bloody hand), and his subsequent visit to me at Mr. Charlton's house, left a very strong impression on my mind that he wished me to give him an indemnity for his acts when at Taranaki. I judged it the most prudent course to abstain from the expression of any opinion thereon, except that the object of the introduction of laws amongst them was to suppress evil and raise the Maori race in the scale of civilization.

I should wish to call the attention of the Government to this question, as it is a very important one, and no doubt will again be raised; and shall be glad to be favoured with instructions thereon.

The information above mentioned about Coade's murder may be only rumour, but I think my informant is a credible party. Supposing it to be incorrect, it may be that Ngatihikairo are afraid of their lawless acts at Taranaki, such as plundering stock of settlers, robbing and burning houses, &c. I understand that they are generally termed Ngatihikairo—a play upon their tribal name Ngatihikairo—or a tribe who absent themselves or run away from cattle and follow the occupation of camp followers, stripping the dead bodies of the vanquished after battle, &c. They certainly do not rank high as warriors in the estimation of the Natives generally.

Secondly, (as many of my party surmised) that Hone Wetere, finding that his immoral life prevents him from holding office as Kaiwhakawa has been acting the part of the dog in the manger, and has by threats or intimidations to Tapihana caused him to reject the Ture at the last moment. Hone Wetere is a very clever energetic man, but with a great want of consistency in his character, and one whom I should be very sorry to place any confidence. I would advise His Excellency and the Government to be very guarded with respect to him.