

514. *The Commissioners*: The Commissioners wish to say a word about the statements which have just been made. Before the year 1868, Mr. Richmond, Sir Donald McLean, Mr. Parris, and other officers, had come here and made various arrangements with the Natives, hearing their claims and receiving applications. The Compensation Court sat when Mr. Richmond was Minister; and Sir Donald McLean afterwards heard what was claimed, and an endeavour was made by the Government to put the claims of all upon a fair footing. Up to that time the Government and the Natives were willing to "go to Hawaiki" and arrange matters according to tribal customs. Then came new disturbances. We do not want to speak about these, because we do not want to pain those who were taken prisoners and afterwards allowed to come back. But at that time the Government said they would take everything into their hands, and settle the affairs of this coast exactly as might seem just. It was when those reserves were afterwards made and settled, that Taurua and his people were allowed to come back. The Natives must understand that all that has been done since has been done entirely out of kindness on the part of the Government. This is why we refuse to listen to any of these old claims of Mr. Richmond's time, or the claims Pehi Turoa brings forward. The promises which have been made since then have been partly fulfilled by the Government, and we are here now to say that the remainder will be fulfilled; but we will not go into any new claims to-day. Therefore we have nothing more to say with respect to Pehi Turoa's claim. Enough has now been said upon this side of the Patea River; and unless there is something new, we should like to hear Taurua's claim on the other side of the river.

515. *Tuteri* said: There were 1,200 acres at Otoia taken out of Mokoia Reserve, and Tutange has let it to Major Turner. I now wish that this land should be taken by the original boundaries to the land where my ancestors lived. I wish that this land should be divided according to the original boundaries, and that my land should remain with me, and that Tutangi's should be separate.

516. *The Commissioners*.] Do you mean that the 1,200 acres at Otoia should be divided between you and Tutangi?—Yes.

517. These reserves were all made for the tribes generally, and whenever the day comes for subdivision then there will have to be a sitting of a Court, when every man will have an opportunity of stating his own claim and obtaining his piece; but we cannot do it ourselves, and we have explained this to all the Natives we have held meetings with. We find that the rights of some Natives have been sacrificed by a portion of a tribe leasing the land without the consent of all those interested in it; but it is not right now to come to the Commission and expect them to remedy such transactions. There may perhaps be a Court appointed, before which the Natives who have been wronged by such dealings may get redress. But the leases which have been already given through their own foolishness, cannot be disturbed by us. Have you ever applied to the Government to have your titles individualized, and the land cut up?—We applied to Mr. Sheehan, but not previously.

518. What answer did he give you?—He said that the matter did not rest with him, but that he would look into it.

519. How long is that since?—Last year, when Mr. Sheehan was at Wellington; but we also asked him when he was here.

520. *The Commissioners*: Our word to the Governor will be, that there should be a Court established for the purpose of individualizing titles, so that people entitled to any land may get it; but that question must be left for the present. It has often happened that Ministers and other officers have heard what has been represented to them by the Natives, but the words were forgotten, because they were not recorded. What takes place here is now being all written down, so that nothing may be forgotten.

521. *Major Brown*: With regard to the 5 acres spoken of and described by Tuteri, I told him he might remain upon it. I did not see any difficulty. There is enough land there to let that be granted to him, besides the 1,200 acres at Otoia Reserve.

522. *Mere Taurua* said: I want a Crown grant to be issued for 30 acres of my land at Rangitautahi, which was reserved for me.

523. *The Commissioners*: That land is all right at the present time, and those who have had Crown grants promised to them will get them. Part of our work is to see that Crown grants are issued.

524. *Taurua* said: In the year 1866 peace was declared, and Mr. Parris was the person who brought the tidings to us at Mokoia. In the same year Sir George Grey brought his army up here. In that year Hori te Anaua requested that the land between the two rivers—Whenuakura and Patea—should be reserved. That is all I will say about that at present. I will now go back to Mokoia. Mr. Parris came there to proclaim peace, and said he wished to get the Natives to return and live quietly, so that the lands should be set apart for the Europeans and for the Natives. I said to Mr. Parris, "Let your work finish at proclaiming peace. Leave the land to me from Okurukuru to Waitotara, the land this side of the Omata Block." Mr. Parris said, "No; I have come to settle this land: to apportion some to the Natives, and some to the Europeans." I said, "No; let your work end at proclaiming peace, and let me settle the land." Owing to what was said to Sir George Grey, he came back from Te Maru. He said to my father, "The land between Patea and Whenuakura will be reserved to you; do not be vexed about European redoubts on this place. They will all be brought back. The whole of the land between these rivers, from the sea back to the mountains, will be reserved to you." In the year 1867 I went to Wellington with Aperahama, Ngairo, Te Heuheu, and Te Poku. I went to Mr. Richmond, and said, "I have come to you that you may return the whole of the land from Waitotara to Waingongoro." Mr. Richmond said to me, "I will return you the land between Patea and Whenuakura, for the Ngarauru and Te Pakakohe." I replied, "No; you should return the land from Waitotara up to Waingongoro." He said, "No; these two tribes must assemble and return to live between Patea and Whenuakura, from the sea back to the mountains." I said, "No; the people of Waitotara should be allowed to live still at Waitotara." He replied, "Are you not of their tribe? Are they not your people? and do you not belong to them?" I said, "Yes; I am one with them, and they one with me; I belong to them, and they belong to me; and our land goes from Waitotara to Patea." Mr. Richmond said that the Pakakohe tribe should go and live between Patea and Whenuakura. I said, "No; they