

consideration will be shown to the chiefs in order of their rank. My idea is, that you and Blake had better come down and meet [Major] Brown at Hawera. He will be there to-night, I expect, and I will come up and join you the moment you send for me. Reply. Meantime again accept my best thanks *ki a korua* [to you both] for the past.

J. SHEEHAN.

No. 13.

REPORT from Mr. MACKAY to Hon. Mr. SHEEHAN of his Proceedings on the Coast.

Whanganui, 6th May, 1879.

I BEG to state shortly my proceedings in returning from New Plymouth to Whanganui. I left the former on the 22nd ultimo, and stopped at Stoney River that afternoon in order to see Ngamahanga tribe. That evening I saw only friendly Natives. They appeared well disposed, but considered they had been wrongly treated in respect of the non-issue of titles for the lands awarded to them by the Compensation Court or the Crown Agents. Next morning I called at Ponehu. The leading chief, Te Motu, was absent: I explained the views of the Government to Natives present, with reference to confiscated lands. Although not expressing themselves satisfied, I am of opinion that if the block between Hangatahua (Stoney River) and Waiweranui, as promised, was duly secured to them, they would assent to the arrangement, and separate themselves from Te Whiti's party. From Ponehu I proceeded to Opunake. I there heard that Ngamare had told Captain Morrison that the soldiers and European residents were to leave the place. So far as I could ascertain, this was merely a repetition of his previous action on several occasions in respect of the Opunake Block. I reached Oeo the same evening (23rd). Heard Hone Pihama was at Hawera. In conversation with his people, found them discontented, because of the uncertain position of the tenure of their lands there. They said Government had told them to occupy lands there, but had not fixed the allotments on the ground, or given them any title to the same. On the 24th saw Hone Pihama at Hawera. He complained that he was promised by the Hon. Mr. Richmond and Mr. Parris 420 acres at Waukina, that on survey it only amounted to 400 acres; that out of Tangahoe Reserve of 10,500 acres, several roads had been taken, thus reducing the area; that the block had not been subdivided, as promised, among the ex-rebels for whom it was originally set apart; Ngahina, another chief, also made a similar complaint, and said he had made some improvements on the land, and would have made more but for the uncertainty of his title, and his holding not being laid off on the ground; that 700 acres of land, in the position now occupied by the Township of Stratford, had been reserved for Natives, but the town had been placed on it, and the reserve taken a considerable distance to the eastward of the road, and in a much less valuable locality; that he (Hone Pihama) had frequently applied for the boundaries of 1,100 acres allotted to him at Oeo to be surveyed, and grant issued for the same, but although the Hon. Mr. Richmond, the Hon. Mr. Sheehan, and the late Sir D. McLean had each in turn promised to do so, as yet no satisfactory arrangement had been made. He had expended upwards of £3,000 in building two dwelling-houses and a hotel on the land, and in fencing and otherwise improving it, and felt he was doing so on an insecure title. His people had been promised 1,100 acres adjacent, but not one of them knew where that area would eventually be fixed. The chief Toi and others had 1,000 acres promised to them on account of his claim to lands near the Mountain Road, and his withdrawing opposition thereto: this was now lost sight of altogether, and the promise denied. On the 25th I, with Captain Blake, visited Titokowaru's settlement at Okaiawa, and found him civil, but seemingly determined to make common cause with and be guided by Te Whiti only. Some of his immediate followers and the people from adjacent villages appeared inclined to let the matter be referred to a Commission of Inquiry. On the 26th we saw the chief Taurua and his people of Pakakohi at Patea. Their grievance was that they considered the area of land set apart for their requirements too small, and what little land had been given to them was not legally secured to them. They, however, appeared otherwise to be well disposed towards the Government; and, by fair treatment and judicious management, there is little reason to apprehend any serious difficulty in bringing any questions between them and the Government to a satisfactory termination. We called at the Ngarauru settlements at Waitotara and Pakaraka, and I have since seen their principal men at Whanganui. They universally approve of a Commission appointed to arrange the whole question of confiscated lands on this Coast. It is useless, and would be highly improper, for me to conceal from the Government that the Ngarauru, Ngatiruanui, Taranaki, and Ngatiawa Tribes, with but few exceptions, are very discontented with their present position, and consider that injustice has been done to them in the matter of their lands. This does not take exactly the same form as the Waikato tribes' objections. The Waikato declaim against all confiscation as wrong. This is not the case with the Ngarauru and Ngatiawa tribes. They admit our right by conquest, but say we have not carried out our engagements about awards and reserves. Some of the Ngatiruanui and Taranaki people hold the same views. The immediate followers of Te Whiti and Titokowaru express the same opinions as the Waikato tribes, and deny the right of the Crown to any confiscated lands. Although Te Whiti and the extreme party will not at present assent to the whole question being investigated and settled by a Commission, I have reason to believe they would make no serious objection to the experiment; and, if they saw that by its operation the better-disposed Natives who submitted their claims to its decision were impartially dealt with and secured in their land-holdings, they would be gradually weaned from their disaffection, which process would be materially aided by reducing the strength of the hostile party by the elimination from its present numbers of those whose claims had been arranged. It is only just to say in conclusion, that the discontent and disaffection which at present obtain among the members of the four tribes before mentioned, does not appear to have arisen from any recent action of the Government, but to be the outcome of a series of mistakes and negligences extending over the past thirteen years.

JAMES MACKAY.