

- (a.) If the Waimate Plains were allowed to be dealt with without obstruction on the part of the Natives, we should make ample provision on that block for the original owners.
- (b.) The small block north of the Waimate Plains Block up to the boundary of the Opunake Block was to be dealt with in the same way.
- (c.) The Opunake Block was regarded as given back to Wi Kingi and his people.
- (d.) The Hangatahau Block, north of Parihaka, was looked upon as being in the same position.

As to the Parihaka Block, I expressed my opinion that Te Whiti had done good work for years on the coast in preserving the public peace; and that I was disposed, in the event of his pursuing a similar line of conduct in the future, to recommend to my colleagues the restoration of the Parihaka Block to the original owners; that is to say, the whole of the country known as the Parihaka Block, extending down to the sea. This restoration was to be entirely dependent on good behaviour.

(3.) On several occasions in Wellington the question of what would be done with the confiscated lands outside the Waimate Plains was mentioned in Cabinet, both before and after the interruption of the survey. I maintained generally the view which I had expressed when discussing the question with my colleagues. On my return from the West Coast, after the interruption of the survey, on the occasion of my submitting to my colleagues my report upon the West Coast question referred to in your letter, I then stated to them my opinion that if Te Whiti did not actively identify himself with the obstruction of the survey or with any breaches of the peace, I would be prepared to recommend the restoration of the Parihaka Block to the original owners. Sir George Grey and myself were in accord upon this question; but the matter never came before the Cabinet for final decision. The general feeling was that it was better to keep things as they then stood, so that the question of restoration might be used as a lever to move the whole question of the West Coast into a sound and safe position. On one point the whole Government was unanimous, namely, that any concessions made to Te Whiti and the other owners of the Parihaka Block should be absolutely conditional on good behaviour.

(4.) It was, therefore, my intention, if the behaviour of Te Whiti and his people should be peaceable and conciliatory, to have recommended the restoration of the Parihaka Block, and to have pressed that recommendation upon my colleagues. The return of the lands would, nevertheless, have been subject to reservations of sites for lighthouses, for roads, and other necessary public purposes. This intention was never mentioned to the Natives, and never assumed the aspect of a promise upon which they could found any claim whatever to the restoration of the block. This intention of mine was publicly notified to the House in the first session of 1879. Two or three months afterwards, the Ministry of which I was a member resigned, and the consideration and settlement of the question thereupon devolved upon our successors in office who now constitute the present Government.

(5.) These and all other similar matters were intended to be referred to a Royal Commission, as announced in the speech of His Excellency the Governor in opening Parliament in the first session of 1879.

I do not know if I have fully answered the question raised in your letter; but I will be glad, if called upon to do so, to give information upon any point or points that, in your opinion, I may have overlooked.

I remain,

Dear Sir Francis,

Yours faithfully,

J. SHEEHAN.

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No. 3.

The COMMISSIONERS to MR. SHEEHAN.

DEAR MR. SHEEHAN,

Parliament House, 31st July, 1880.

I received last night your letter of the 27th, and Sir William Fox unites with me in thanks for the very full explanation you have been kind enough to give us of your views with regard to Te Whiti and the Parihaka Block. It does not seem to us that you leave any material point untouched.

We presume you will not object to this correspondence being appended to the Report we are now sending in to His Excellency the Governor.

I remain,

Dear Mr. Sheehan,

Yours faithfully,

F. D. BELL.