

In conclusion, I will only remark that in my opinion the circumstances I have set forth amply justify the original arrest, and the subsequent detention, of the Maori prisoners, as well as the exceptional legislation contingent thereon. The course adopted has been taken not only in the interests of the community as a whole, but actually in the interests of the Native race, and especially in the interests of the Maoris arrested. For there can be little doubt that the peace of the country hung upon a slender thread, and as little that an outbreak would have been a dire misfortune to the Maoris as a race, and particularly to the Maoris of the West Coast. The question now is, how to remove the fear of Te Whiti and Tohu, which rests like a blight on the minds of the Natives. When that is done the prisoners may be safely returned, and the West Coast difficulty may be regarded as settled.

Native Office, Wellington, New Zealand,
20th December, 1880.

JOHN BRYCE,
Native and Defence Minister.

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