

contemplated by the Government to remove the Proclamation from the lands in question during the month of February, 1881. The prayer of this memorial therefore is that your Excellency will be pleased to maintain the Proclamation in force until after the meeting of Parliament, in conformity with the following resolutions passed at the aforesaid public meeting, held at Thames:—

“1. That a respectful address be presented to the Governor, praying him to maintain the Proclamation over the Patetere Block until after the meeting of Parliament.

“2. That the following gentleman, namely, Messrs. McGowan, McCullough, and Dr. Kilgour, be a committee to draw up the memorial to His Excellency the Governor, and that Sir George Grey, the senior member for the Thames, be requested to present the same.”

JAMES MCGOWAN,
WILLIAM MCCULLOUGH, } Committee.
JAMES KILGOUR,

No. 25.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 7th January, 1881.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th ultimo, covering a memorial to the Governor from Messrs. James McGowan, William McCullough, and James Kilgour, on behalf of a public meeting held at Grahamstown, praying His Excellency to maintain the Proclamation over the Patetere Block until after the meeting of Parliament.

In reply, I have to inform you that the memorial in question, together with your letter of the 8th November covering it, has been presented to His Excellency, in accordance with your request.

I have, &c.,

Sir George Grey, K.C.B., M.H.R., Kawau, Auckland.

THOMAS DICK.

No. 26.

21st January, 1881.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your report No. $\frac{183}{10}$, dated the 20th December, 1880, on the lands in Patetere District, and have to say that it has been perused by members of the Government with much interest.

I have now to say that Mr. Gill notes that the Native Land Court will sit at Cambridge on the 8th February, when the interest of the Crown in the Patetere Blocks will be determined. You are therefore requested to see that land to the value of the survey, in addition to land to the value of the money advanced by way of purchase, be secured to the Government.

JAMES MCKERROW,

S. Percy Smith, Esq., Chief Surveyor, Auckland.

Surveyor-General.

No. 27

SIR,—

Wellington, 29th January, 1881.

I have the honor to address you on behalf of certain of the Native owners of the block of land called Patetere.

In the *Gazette* of the 25th November last appeared a notification concerning this block to which I beg to refer you. I also beg leave to refer you to “The Government Native Land Purchases Act, 1877,” “The Amendment Act, 1878,” and “The Native Land Act, 1877.”

It will be seen that the above-mentioned notice purports to be issued under the last-mentioned Act, and not, as I submit it should, under all the above Acts.

I would submit that the notice was insufficient. This is the opinion, I believe, of several eminent lawyers—Mr. Stout, Mr. Richmond, and the Hon. J N Wilson.

I would submit, further, that there are two courses open to the Government in issuing notifications. First. Issuing a notification of the intention of the Government to relinquish negotiations, this notification being in such a form as to take effect at the expiration of two months certain from the date of the appearance of the notification in the *Gazette*. Second. Issuing a notification that the Crown has ceased to have any interest in the land; thus at once determining its interest without the necessity of allowing two months to elapse.

The notification in the *Gazette* does not follow either course.

It is too late now to issue a notification of relinquishment, as the Native Land Court will meet on the 8th February. It is also clearly impossible for the Crown to intimate that it has ceased to have any interest until the Court has heard the claim of the Crown and determined its interest.

It is feared in this state of affairs that the sitting of the Court will be a failure, as many Natives will probably refuse to cede land to the Crown if the remainder of the block is still to remain for two months longer under Proclamation; moreover, the Europeans will naturally shrink from risking the payment of £30,000 or £40,000 upon transactions not legal.

I would suggest to you, however, a plain and simple way out of the difficulty—namely, if the Government, upon its claim on the land being settled by the Native Land Court, will forthwith issue a new notification to the effect that the Crown's interest has ceased over the remainder of the block, the whole matter can then be closed.

I may also be allowed to submit that any new notifications should purport to be under all the above Acts, and should be signed by the Governor, or by a Minister on his behalf.

I have therefore the honor to request that you will inform me whether, on the claims of the Crown to lands in the above block being settled in the Native Land Court, the Government will forthwith issue a notification to the effect that the Crown has ceased to have any interest in the remainder of the block.