

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

NOTES OF AN INQUIRY MADE BY HON. NATIVE MINISTER AT KIHIKIHI, ON DECEMBER 19, 1883.

Laid on the Table by leave of the House.

PRESENT : Hon. Mr. Bryce, Mr. Lewis (Under-Secretary), Mr. Butler, and Mr. Wilkinson,
Rewi, Wahanui, Taonui, and Ngatai.

Hon. Mr. Bryce : I want to state to those present that I am making an inquiry now for the satisfaction of the Government under the Amnesty Act. That Act in reference to pardon was to be general or exceptional, according as the Government believed to be right, and it was to apply to offences in the words of the Act more or less of a political character. The Government, after mature consideration, determined that the amnesty should be general, and that there should be no exceptions. The only question remaining, then, is the political or non-political character of the offence; and it is with a view of determining this question in the case of the murder of Moffatt that I propose to put some questions to Ngatai. I ask him to reply frankly to my questions, and I promise that his replies will not lead him into trouble—they may do the opposite: what I mean is that his replies will not be used in evidence against him. I shall want to take the evidence of others also, and shall not repeat this statement to those who have heard it, but I want it to be understood that what I now say applies in every case.

1. *Hon. Mr. Bryce*. Your name is Ngatai?—Yes.
2. Your tribe?—Ngatihaua.
3. Were you ever acquainted with the European named Moffatt?—Yes.
4. Do you remember the time of his death?—Yes.
5. Do you know the date?—I forget. I have it written down in a book which is not with me.
6. Did your tribe belong to a political association known amongst the Europeans as the King movement?—Yes.
7. Was a part of the policy of that association one of isolation—that is to say, of preventing Europeans coming within certain boundaries?—That was one of our main principles.
8. Will you state the boundaries of the district in which the principles of isolation prevailed, but particularly in relation to the district where Moffatt was killed?—The boundaries commence at Utapu on the Wanganui River, thence to Moerangi, between Taupo and Tuhua.
9. At what place was Moffatt when he was killed?—At Matahauea.
10. Was that place within the boundaries of isolation that you have alluded to?—Yes.
11. Was the policy of isolation to which you have referred in full force at the time of Moffatt's murder?—Yes.
12. Was it not slackened or in abeyance?—The policy was still in force.
13. Do you know the reason for Moffatt's murder; if so, state it?—The reason he was killed was because that word had gone forth from us as King people. Land was the cause of his being killed.
14. That being the reason, what was the authority for it? What tribes were in that association?—All the tribes that joined the King movement.
15. How was the authority for the maintenance of isolation given—i.e., how did you get the authority for the killing of Moffatt from those tribes?—The first instructions we received through Manga, at the commencement of the fighting. Afterwards Wahanui erected posts marking off that district to be *tapu* against Europeans; and I protected it accordingly.
16. Then, you clearly understood that this act was done in furtherance of the instructions of the tribes who formed this political association?—Yes.
17. Were you acquainted with Moffatt for some time previous to his death?—Yes.
18. Where were you acquainted with him?—I knew him when he was living with the King Natives at Te Kuiti.
19. Anywhere else?—Yes; at Ohura.
20. Was your acquaintance of long duration, and were you intimate with him?—Yes; I had known him for a long time, and we had lived as Hauhaus together: Moffatt having left the Europeans and taken refuge with us. He told us the reason he left the Europeans was on account of making powder. So we were good friends.
21. Why did Moffatt leave you?—He was arrested by the Europeans for making the powder.
22. How long was he absent on that occasion?—A year or more.
23. Was it on return from that absence that he was killed?—Yes.
24. Will you explain how it was that, not having objected to him previously, you had violent objections to his return?—The first time he came we understood his reasons, but this time he came to a place where he had no right.
25. What do you mean by the expression "he came to a place where he had no right"? Was not the place he was killed near where he had formerly resided?—The reason Moffatt was allowed in the district at first was because he made powder, but, having been arrested for that, there was no reason for his coming back again.