

*Hon. Mr. Ballance* agreed with *Henare Matua* that two members and the Chairman would be sufficient to form a quorum; and he would give effect to that suggestion. He had received a number of printed amendments to the Committees Act, but had not yet been able to study them. He would, however, go carefully into the matter. His desire was to make the Committees more useful by giving them more power.

*Hirini Taiwhanga* said that he had a perfect right to speak about prospecting for gold and about surveys, as there was a bond of union between himself and the King Natives. If the whole of the Waikato Maoris had joined Wahanui in consenting to the survey of the land, then he (*Taiwhanga*) would have had nothing to say. He asked *Honana*, one of the King's advisers, whether such permission had been given, and the reply was that it was not the wish of all the Natives, but something which Wahanui had undertaken himself. Seeing that these people had not consented to the surveys, if those things were allowed to go on confusion would arise, such as took place with William King about Waitara. None of them were anxious for that state of things to occur again. Their great desire was that the Native Minister should assist them in getting some such law passed as he (*Taiwhanga*) had read. *Taiwhanga* denied the Minister's statement about Native schools, and said he placed no dependence on the promise of the Government that Native children would be educated. He would again ask the Minister to keep back the surveyors who were surveying the external boundary of the King country, and also to restrain Europeans from prospecting for gold.

*Hon. Mr. Ballance*: I have heard what *Taiwhanga* has said, and it appears to me that his ideas about promoting the welfare of the human race, and of the Native people in particular, are very crude. Let me refer to one or two things that he has said. He states that the Treaty of Waitangi guarantees to the Native people all the rights and privileges of British subjects. That is quite true; but how would he carry it out? He says, stop the prospecting in the King country. I hold in my hand a telegram from the Chairman of the Native Committee, which has unanimously agreed to send out prospectors. Now, whether are we, the Government, carrying out the Treaty of Waitangi by listening to the representations of the Native people, or by listening to *Hirini Taiwhanga*? I know that the Committee is elected by every Maori in that district, and I listened to its wishes, and gave effect to them. I do not know that *Taiwhanga* represents a single man in the Waikato. I have shown you clearly that the Government are carrying out the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in carrying out the wishes of the Committee.—[*Hirini Taiwhanga*: Far from it.]—*Taiwhanga* says that my statement about the schools is not correct, and he says that he came down to Wellington and spoke about some system of schools that he had in his mind. What did he recommend? He recommended boarding-schools—taking away from the people their children when they were young; but we find that the people will not part with their children, and why should they? They love their children above everything in the world, and they like to have them with them. The Government establishes schools in all your settlements to enable the children attending school to live with their parents; and I ask you, which is the best system? Then, again, we have established schools to which children can be sent to receive a good education. Only lately I took into the Native Office a young man from Ngapuhi, who had been educated at Te Aute, and he is doing exceedingly well. Regarding the policy of *Tawhiao* and his followers, it seems they are trying to get the control of the land handed over to *Tawhiao*, and if this goes on it means that the land will be transferred from the rightful owners to others. My advice to you, and I think it is more in accordance with the Treaty of Waitangi, is this: let those who have land keep it, and not transfer it to some one else. *Hirini* says that if prospecting goes on there will be another Waitara. Well, the prospecting, as I have shown, is going on under the Committee. I ask this question, Who is going to fire the first shot? It must be *Hirini* and his associates, because the work is being done by the Committee; and I ask *Hirini* if he is prepared for the responsibility of firing the first shot. I only make these remarks in order to show you that what is going on at *Whatiwhatiho* is not a patriotic movement on behalf of the people, but very likely a selfish movement for the benefit of a few. I do not know whether you will expect me to address you again; but I will now conclude by just touching on one matter. I had a conversation to-day with *Harawira te Mahikai* in his tent, and he said a few words which touched me very closely and very deeply. He said first of all that the Treaty of Waitangi was very well, and that the *mana* was in the Queen; that it was the Queen and no one else who would preserve to you your lands. His other words were these: "Take care of my people, and do not be prevented by any faults of their own." I took these words down in my notebook, and shall never forget them, for so long as I have life I shall try to carry out the dying injunction of *Harawira*. And now let me thank you heartily for all the kindness you have shown to me since I first came amongst you. I bid you farewell on this occasion, but hope that we shall have the pleasure of meeting again.

*Te Puke te Ao* said that he would like to state that he was the proper representative of Waikato and the West Coast, and when the Land Disposition Bill was before the House he did his utmost to improve it. He endeavoured to prevent the provisions of the Bill affecting the land within *Tawhiao's* boundary; and it was through no fault of his that this was not done. Wahanui had supported him in this. *Taiwhanga* should not blame the Native Minister for the troubles in Waikato, but should consider how differently other Governments had treated the Natives—how *Te Whiti* and his people were treated by Mr. Bryce's Ministry. Mr. Bryce had not attempted to pacify *Te Whiti* in the first instance. But they could see that the present Native Minister had their interests at heart, as evidenced by his going about from place to place and meeting the Maoris. He fully appreciated the kindness of the Minister in attending the meeting and carefully explaining the provisions of the Bill. With regard to the prospecting in the King country the Native Minister had told them that the district Committee had consented to the prospectors being sent out; but he (*Te Puke*) thought that, in an important matter like this, the whole of the people should be consulted, and give their consent. It would not be sufficient for Wahanui alone to agree. Of course there are a