

T. W. LEWIS, Esq., Under-Secretary, Native Department, to R. S. BUSH, Esq., R.M., Tauranga.
(Telegram.)

Wellington, 31st October, 1888.

MR. KELLY, M.H.R., has pressed upon the Government the immediate desirability of extinguishing the Native title to the Rotorua Township, and represents that, owing to the death of Taekata's wife, the present is a very favourable time to purchase. I was instructed to hold a meeting with the Natives and open negotiations, but cannot get away owing to Mr. Mitchelson's absence. You are acquainted with the position of title and question generally, and Ministers wish you to proceed to Rotorua and ascertain what can be done. It is very desirable to purchase if the whole or the greater part of the interests can be obtained, and I think you can show the owners that it will be to their advantage to sell. Please telegraph report of your meeting and negotiations. If you think it necessary, I may be able to come up later on. Please also ascertain at same time whether Whakarewarewa can be acquired on reasonable terms. I have not stated price, as Government only wish you in first place to ascertain whether owners, or how many of them, are disposed to sell.

T. W. LEWIS, Under-Secretary.

R. S. Bush, Esq., R.M., Tauranga.

R. S. BUSH, Esq., R.M., Rotorua, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Rotorua, 8th November, 1888.

MET Ngatiwhakaue to-day. Long discussion about agreements with Fenton and Clarke. They deny having authorised anybody to sell. Without doubt they are very much divided. I feel sure, without having said anything to them, that one-half at least would sell as soon as the ice was broken. I stated it had been represented to the Government that they were anxious to sell, and that I had been deputed to see them with a view to ascertaining their intentions. I was here and prepared to listen to them. The meeting terminated without any result, all being afraid to show their hands. Many, from what they have said, would sell. Petera's and Taiwhanga's supporters, it appears, have been accusing those not favourably inclined towards Taiwhanga of wanting to sell, but to-day's meeting must have satisfied them that such was not the case. Several have asked me to bring money to buy. Aporo said he believed one-half could be bought up in six months. Propose leaving Natives alone till to-morrow afternoon, in meantime seeing those who seem disposed to sell, and then meeting Natives again to-morrow if they wish, returning to Tauranga on Saturday. Not one of them would say at meeting he was in favour of selling. I adopted line I did to prevent them thinking you were anxious to acquire the land. Will telegraph again to-morrow.

Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

R. S. BUSH, Resident Magistrate.

R. S. BUSH, Esq., R.M., Rotorua, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Rotorua, 10th November, 1888.

LEAVING for Tauranga. Purchase can be carried out if commenced at once. Had I had the deeds and money, feel sure I could have purchased thirty interests yesterday. Peter himself asked me to bring the money next time I came. I left the Natives to themselves after meeting of Thursday. They came to me with offers. All that is wanted is to make a beginning. If you can furnish me with deeds and money I can commence purchase when here for Court next week. Nothing further required as to negotiation. If you will allow me employ Hans Tapsell to help me, all he wants, so I gather in conversation with him, is to be reinstated at his salary of £50 per annum: that is an increase of £30 on his present amount, but only what he received formerly. The purchase could be made for about six thousand. Would suggest that I purchase, Hans Tapsell to receive an additional £30 per annum to his salary, Mr. Dansey to be made licensed interpreter. This will be the cheap way to purchase. Natives anxious for me to purchase at once. No delay should be made if purchase resolved on. If resolved on, and you can send me deeds and money by Tuesday's "Iona," I will come up on Wednesday or Thursday next, commence purchase, which seems to be the Natives' wish. The opportunity should not be lost. Ngahuruhuru and other leading men will sell; could have purchased his interest to-day. Please let me know your determination as soon as possible. Immediate action necessary if freehold required. Natives should be taken while in humour.

R. S. BUSH, Resident Magistrate.

T. W. Lewis, Esq., Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, to R. S. BUSH, Esq., R.M., Tauranga.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 13th November, 1888.

THANKS for your telegrams referring to your meetings *re* Rotorua Township. Matter now under consideration of Ministers.

T. W. LEWIS, Under-Secretary.

R. S. Bush, Esq., R.M., Tauranga.

R. S. BUSH, Esq., R.M., Tauranga, to UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Tauranga, 12th November, 1888.

I have the honour to report for your information that, in accordance with your telegram, I proceeded to Rotorua on the morning of the 7th instant, and met the Ngatiwhakaue on the morning of the 8th in their meeting-house. Tama te Kapua, Petera Pukuatua, Ngahuruhuru, Eru Paimai, Te Warihi, Taekata, and about one hundred other owners were present.

I took up a position of indifference, telling them, as they had offered to sell Rotorua lands to the Government, I had been deputed to meet them to hear their proposals or whatever they wished to say on the subject. I was asked if the fact of discussing the sale did not break the agreement. I replied, Certainly not. Petera said they had not offered the place for sale, and did not wish to do