

of the Europeans should be returned to us. In all the times past we have worked this land, used it, dwelt upon it, and leased portions of it, and yet now we find there is this trouble about it. That is why I thought it proper, on behalf of myself and people, to lay this matter before the Commissioners, because they are inquiring into all matters in which there are troubles between Europeans and Natives. There is another case, but perhaps the Commissioners may be weary of listening.

837. *Mr. Rees.*] No?—Then I wish now to speak of a block of land to which we who are here have a claim. It was land that was given for goods years ago, in the time of the Treaty of Waitangi. It was sold by one individual Native to this European, who gave goods for it. When the whole of the people came to know of this sale they objected to it. Then our old man before he died had compassion on this person who had sold the land. He had compassion on him from a feeling of relationship, and because the land that this person had sold without the consent of the people was kept, while the goods had been retained. Our old man set apart some other land for him. This piece of land was to compensate the European for the goods this Native had obtained. The old man said to the European, "Here is a piece of land that will requite you for the goods you gave in payment of the other piece of land that you did not get." Then some of our old people said to this European who got this land, "Give to us further payment than you have already given for this land," and the European consented to do so, but no further payment was given us down to the time that the surveys commenced to take place. Then we went to the Crown to arrange as to what portion of the land should go to the European in payment of the goods he gave. The survey was made about thirty years ago, and the piece of land which it was agreed in the former time should go to the European was set apart for him and surveyed. In the meantime it is probable that the European had transferred his interest in the land to some other European. The matter was brought before Mr. Dillon Bell, the Commissioner, and he saw that the consideration was very small indeed, and Mr. Dillon Bell set apart 500 acres in consideration of the payment that was made by the European, and the balance of the land (900 acres) was abandoned from sale. The European then got into straitened circumstances, and was unable to give any further payment for the land. He died, and nothing further was done with the land. Then, what we are entitled to is the 900 acres that was surveyed, and declared to be in excess of the portion to which the European was rightly entitled. Some of the persons interested wanted to sell, but none did sell. We have a map of the land—that is to say, of the 500 acres that went to the European and the 900 acres to which we are entitled. In recent times we applied to the Native Land Court to have the title to the 900 acres ascertained. It was then that we discovered, having sent in a public notification, that the Government had taken that 900 acres for itself—that the Government had taken the valuable timber that was growing on it, and had sold it to Europeans. Then Hare Napia and myself telegraphed to the Government warning it against dealing with this land. That telegram was as follows [copy produced]: "To the Commissioner for Crown Lands, Auckland.—Protest against sale of kauri timber on Sections 18 and 29, Matawerohia. The land is not Crown land.—HARE NAPIA, HONE PEETI." We have seen in the *Gazette* a notification, dated the 18th May, 1890, that the kauri upon the land was to be sold. Hence our protest. The Government had included our 900 acres in those sections. The name of the 900 acres is Mokau No. 3. The reply from the Commissioner was, "Cease your impertinent work. You will be summoned if you do this." Then we sent a letter to Dr. Pollen, but he did not listen to what we had to say, and the whole of the timber on that land was sold. Then, when we went into the Native Land Court we were informed that the land belonged to the Government, and the case was dismissed. It would not be tried at all by the Court. The map we sent to the Survey Office, and it was kept there. We sent it there to have the subdivision of the 900 acres confirmed, and it was kept there. I have gone fully into the details, so as to place the matter clearly before the Commissioners. Then we sent a letter to the Government about the Puketotara Block. That is the first block I spoke about. The reply we received from the Government was that the land belonged to the Crown. That was all. There are a great many lands belonging to the tribes in the same position as these I have mentioned—lands that have been wrongfully taken by the various Governments.

838. In all these cases did the Government allege that they had purchased the land from the Natives?—No.

839. Did they allege any specific title other than saying, "The land belongs to the Crown"?—They did not explain the nature of the title. In our correspondence with them we asked them to do so. We asked them, "Have you made a law by which you are enabled to take this land? If so let us know."

840. Have you sent a petition to Parliament in relation to this matter?—No.

841. We will report that these complaints are made by the Ngapuhi, without mentioning the names of the blocks. Then you should send a petition to Parliament, signed by some of the leading chiefs of the Ngapuhi, setting out a list of the blocks in which these things have taken place. Then the Committee of the House will have our report that these complaints have been made to us, and will also have your petition before it. Then the Committee could have before it one or two of the older chiefs—men like you yourself, who know about these matters—and could examine them, as well as the Government officers, in order to see if the Crown has any title. Then, if it be shown that the Crown has dealt with your lands without your consent, and without having any deeds, no doubt the House will either grant compensation or in some way do justice in the matter. You will have to speak to Eparaima, your present member, about it, to Carroll also, and your other members, as well as to Sir George Grey; and I myself will give every assistance towards seeing that justice is done?—Then, that is all I have to say.

842. Do you think it would be advisable to have reserves set apart in the different districts for the education of the Maori children—that is to say, good, big landed reserves in the case of all Maori tribes, for the purpose of having their children educated properly, and not merely in the