

difficulties in connection with the lands about Kawakawa were not mentioned on the former occasion. For a long time past I have been communicating with the Government with reference to a block of land called Opuā. There is a railway-station there, and it is the place where coal is supplied to the steamers. Another block of land is called Te Maihi. A third block is Wai-kurakura, also at the Kawakawa. A fourth block is Whakarorengi, also at the Kawakawa. The whole of these lands are in the possession of the Government. The Government said that Maihi Paraone Kawiti should be taken to be the person in connection with those lands. These are lands that have gone to the Government a long time ago. That old man asked the Government a long time ago about these lands. I have a copy of the communications that he sent to the Government, but it may take some time to explain about them, they are so long. He also wished to make application to the Queen, but the Government said they would attend to that application. But no application was forwarded to the Queen, because the Government have returned the application. It was an application made in accordance with the law of 1852. That is the trouble we have got: and we wish the Government to return those lands to us. That is all I have to say about that.

*Mr. Rees.*] What ground have you for asking the Government to return those lands?—Because those lands of our old chief went to the Government without any proper right.

Do you mean to say that Marsh Brown Kawiti did not sell the land?—Yes, he did not sell these lands to the Government.

Did he give them to the Government?—No, he did not give them to the Government.

Were the titles to them determined in the Native Land Court?—I do not know whether they were awarded to him or not by the Native Land Court.

Were they awarded to any one else, who sold them to the Government?—Some portion of the lands was awarded to somebody else.

Do you mean to say that some portion of that land has not been awarded to any one, but that the Government has taken it?—Yes.

Were these lands what are called “surplus lands”? Was this the condition: that Europeans claimed the lands, the Government Court gave them a portion of the lands only, and then the Government kept the balance?—A portion of the lands went to the Europeans and the balance of the land went to the Government.

Then the Government kept what they did not allow the Europeans to occupy?—Yes.

Although we cannot directly ask the Government to give you back that land, we can ask that an inquiry be made, and then if an inquiry be made by the Legislature you may depend upon it that justice will be done?—That is very clear.

*Hoterene Maihi Kawiti:* I wish to explain with reference to what the last speaker has spoken of. Some portion of what he has said is clear, and some portions are not clear. Those four blocks that were mentioned are Native land, over which the title has not been extinguished. These lands that I have mentioned are lands that have not been disposed of by the old people. We afterwards discovered that the Government placed a red mark on the maps of those lands. For five years Marsh Brown Kawiti was making application to the Government about these lands, and then when he died his children made applications. About 50 acres of our land at Kopuru went to the Government. There were no pegs put down along the survey-line, and in that way a portion of the land belonging to the Natives became included. It would be a good thing for the Commissioners to come up and see this land. Kapitoni was the man who surveyed it. He was the first surveyor who surveyed these lands. These are the troubles the Maoris are suffering under. After that the Government surveyor came, and the old survey was abandoned. I wish now to speak upon something that was omitted on the last occasion—that is, with reference to our own Native Committees managing the matters relating to our lands. We did not have such troubles as these with regard to the surveys when we managed our own affairs. I wish the Commissioners to understand that I do not agree with the survey of lands that have not passed the Court.

*Mr. Rees.*] Do you agree to what the two former speakers, and especially to what Wi Pomare said, about schools being established for the Maori children, and the Committees to have the partial management of them?—Yes, I agree with what they said about the schools. I am one of those who wish to have a school established in our district. The reason why the Native school at Waioimio was broken up was because the Committee had no controlling-power. We had a school established in our district, but the children would not attend it, and it was the absence of controlling-power on the part of the Committee that led to this state of things.

*Te Atimana Wharerau:* We agree to the Commissioners' suggestion as to the schools. I stand up so that the Commissioners may know that we all agree with what they have said about the schools. As to what the last speaker said, objecting to surveys being made on lands that are held in the Native state, I wish also to state that we object to the survey of those lands.

*Kaka te Hakiro:* I think that the question of the School Committees should remain over for the present, but let me also say that I think we should have the schools—we, the Natives, in our Committees to have the power. The 71st section of the New Zealand Constitution Act states it will be well that the laws, customs, and usages of the Natives should have full power in relation to themselves—that is, the laws and the customs that will not cause evil to the people, so that the Natives may be enabled to manage, according to their own customs, matters relating to their lands. You, the Commissioners, can look at that law of 1852. What I agree to is that the Commissioners should act with respect to those lands that have been taken improperly from our old people. In this district a great many of our lands have gone in that way, but these lands are not of very great extent and they should be returned to the Natives. Our Native lands should remain under the 71st section of the Constitution Act, and of those lands there should be no surveys nor anything else. Let the laws of the Government bear only upon our lands that are Crown-granted.

*Wi Pomare:* If the Commissioners will allow me I would like to say something with reference to what the last speaker said about the School Committees. My fixed idea with respect to the Committees for schools is that the Government should give them full and complete power for