

In conclusion, I repeat that, despite the aggressively offensive terms in which you have thought fit to address me, if you will furnish an explanation of the discrepancy between the land-tax value of the land and the purchase-money I shall be glad to give it every consideration.

G. Hutchison, Esq., M.H.R., Wellington.

I have, &c.,
JOHN MCKENZIE.

No. 7.

Mr. G. HUTCHISON, M.H.R., to the Hon. the ACTING NATIVE MINISTER.

(Memorandum.)

Wellington, 16th August, 1897.

WITH reference to your reply of the 11th instant, on the subject of the application to remove the restriction on the title of Section 569, Patea district, I notice you state that "the usual practice" has been followed.

I should be sorry to suppose that "the usual course" is to act as you have done in "declining to entertain" an application because of a land-tax valuation in excess of the consideration without inquiring if there was any explanation. I happen to know the course you took is not "the usual practice." This is not the first application I have lodged under similar circumstances, but it is the first that has been intercepted. I had supposed an inquiry in open Court upon sworn testimony would have afforded the proper basis for a just decision, but I confess I had not sufficiently realised that such a course is not the one you are likely to favour.

You now say you will be "glad to give every consideration to any explanation" I have to offer, but you seem to forget you have already prejudged the case. I prefer not to discuss the matter further with you.

G. HUTCHISON.

Hon. John McKenzie, General Government Buildings, Wellington.

No. 8.

The Hon. the ACTING NATIVE MINISTER to Mr. G. HUTCHISON, M.H.R.

SIR,—

Department of Justice, Wellington, 17th August, 1897.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, and observe with satisfaction that you have seen fit to moderate the tone of your correspondence, to which I took exception in my letter of the 11th.

You say that you happen to know that the course I took in dealing with your application is not the usual one. I am not aware of the means you have of making yourself acquainted with the practice in such cases, but I prefer to rely upon my own knowledge of the practice of the department which I am temporarily administering.

It is significant that the explanation of the discrepancy between the land-tax value, £365, and the purchase-money, £140, is not yet forthcoming, and your failure to furnish it, on the pretext that you prefer not to discuss the matter with me, justifies the conclusion that the interests of the Natives will be best conserved by maintaining the decision that your application cannot be entertained until the Government is in possession of such an explanation.

I have, &c.,

G. Hutchison, Esq., M.H.R., Wellington.

JOHN MCKENZIE.

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