

18. *Petition No. 180 of 1924, of Hare Popata and another*, relates to the *Pukewhau* Block. The petitioners prayed for an inquiry in order to find out by what right the Government took this land. The answer is that the case is one of straight-out surplus land, and we deal with it accordingly.

19. *Petition No. 183 of 1924, of Keita te Ahere*, which relates to the *Whakaangi* Block. The transactions in connection with this block are interrelated with those in the *Taemaro* Block, in respect of which there have been various petitions to Parliament, and we have considered the cases of the two blocks in conjunction. The story is a long and complicated one. Lands were sold to European purchasers prior to the advent of British sovereignty and were the subject of reference to the original Commissioners under the Land Claims Ordinances, and also later to Mr. Commissioner Bell. The lands are situate to the east of Mangonui Harbour, and the transactions provoked a conflict between two sets of Maoris, one led by Pororua and the other by Nopera Panakareao, and scrip was awarded to the purchasers representing the area of land for which in the ordinary course the Commissioners would have recommended a grant. The Crown therefore became in effect the purchaser, as standing in the shoes of the original claimants. However, the Crown was unable to obtain possession of the land because of the conflict between the two Maori Chiefs, and made a further payment to one of the Chiefs. Subsequently, in order to settle the troubles that had arisen, the Crown extinguished whatever rights or title the Maoris may have claimed to have remained in them by the payment of a further agreed sum. The whole question could only be one of surplus lands, and, even if there was any surplus in this case, any rights of whatsoever kind the Maoris might have had therein were extinguished by the Crown purchases from the Maoris.

20. *Petition No. 143 of 1925, of Riri M. Kawiti and others*, concerns the *Opuia* Block. This petition claimed that the land had been wrongly taken by the Government, and had never been sold by the elders or any member of the tribe to whom the land belonged. There had been a previous petition about this block which had been referred to Mr. Houston, M.H.R., and he made his report (which included a finding in relation to the Tangonge Block as mentioned in paragraph 17 (i) ) on the 22nd July, 1907. Several petitions, indeed, had been referred to Mr. Houston, and he reported that in the case of some of the lands mentioned in the schedule to the Commission (without mentioning specifically what those lands were) there were portions of surplus lands undisposed of by the Crown. He also reported that there were landless Natives residing in the locality of such surplus lands, and that, without prejudice to the Crown's legal right to such surplus lands, it would be an act of grace on the part of the Crown to confer portions of such lands on (a) the landless natives; or (b) on those who, but for the alleged sales, would have been the owners, according to Maori custom, of such lands; or (c) on both; and he recommended legislation with a view to portions of the surplus lands being set aside for such natives. No such legislation was in fact introduced. The petition that we have now under immediate consideration may be disposed of shortly by saying that there is no ground for the contention made in the petition that the land was wrongfully taken by the Government. That, however, still leaves open the question of surplus lands, and the case being one of straight-out surplus, we deal with it accordingly.

21. *Petition No. 24 of 1938, of Kipa Roera*, concerns the *Manawaora* Block. This is also a straight-out case of surplus lands, and the petition can be considered on no other basis. Mr. Cooney admitted that it should be dealt with in that way, and we are so dealing with it accordingly.

22. (i) *Petition No. 97 of 1938, of George Marriner and others*, concerns the *Tapuae* and *Motukaraka* Blocks. Originally Hone Hare and a number of other Maoris lodged a petition in 1926 for the return to them of the island of Motukaraka, containing 4 acres,