

Minister, and reported that land should be provided for the landless Maoris. I wish it to be most distinctly understood that Mr. Mackay did not say that this was to satisfy the main general claim of the Ngaitahu Tribe. That claim still continued to exist. Then Mr. Ballance's Government came into office, in which Mr. Cadman was Native Minister. Taiaroa and I waited upon Mr. Ballance and Mr. Cadman as a deputation, and asked them to inquire into the position in regard to the claim of the Ngaitahu Tribe, and Mr. Ballance gave his consent to our request. Mr. Cadman went down to Otago, and he asked me to go with him, as I was the mouthpiece of the Ngaitahu Tribe. The first place he and I visited was Otago, to deal with the representations of the Maoris there with regard to the sale of the Otago Block, and, having finished the sittings there, we went to Aparima—i.e., Riverton. I want to state that the Maoris explained to Mr. Cadman that they were suffering injury; that they were living in a most unfortunate position; that they had not sufficient land for their support; and Mr. Cadman saw that they were entirely justified in their complaints and representations, and in making the claim they did. I am trying to condense my remarks as much as possible, for I do not want to weary the Committee. We went on from there to the Bluff, and we there met the people of Stewart Island and Ruapuke Island, who assembled at the Bluff and came before us. They asked that more land should be provided for them, for they had not sufficient for their support and maintenance. Mr. Cadman agreed, and said he would submit their representations to Parliament. We came back from there, and went on to Waitaki. When we got to Waitaki the residents of Waitaki and Moeraki asked the Government to provide land for them, because they belonged to the party of Tamaiharoa of Te Umukaha, but had gone away inland in 1877 to occupy the land which they maintained had not been sold to Kemp in 1848. They had lived on that land for three years or more, at a place called Omarama. I want to point out that these people went there because they never signed the deed of sale to Mr. Kemp or to Mr. Mantell. I desire to point out to the Committee that representations were made to the Government by European runholders and sheepowners that the Maoris had seized and were occupying these places I have mentioned; and Mr. Sheehan, who was then Native Minister in the Grey Government, visited the Maoris, together with Mr. Taiaroa, Rawiri te Mamaru, and the Hon. Mr. Campbell, at Omarama, and told them to go back down to the coast and occupy their old kaingas on the reserve there, and that the Government would duly inquire into their grievances, and provide sufficient land for them. Now, that was a further recognition of the rights of the Ngaitahu Maoris' claim. I may say that Mr. Sheehan was the first Native Minister to visit Kaiapoi in regard to these claims. Subsequently Sir Robert Stout, who was then Premier, interviewed the Maoris, and promised them that their claims would be inquired into and made good. And I myself, since I had then become the member for the South Island Maoris, and Mr. Duncan, the member for Oamaru, also went with him. Sir Robert, in replying to the Maori representations, said, "Yes, I can see you have been injured and unjustly dealt with, and your grievances will be placed before the Native Minister, so that they may be settled and redressed." Naturally the Maoris were very much elated over a remark and a promise of that kind. It was an expression of opinion and intention by the Premier himself, and the Maoris naturally concluded that it must result in something tangible being done for their benefit.

*The Chairman:* What year was that?

*Mr. Parata:* It was about the latter end of the year 1885, after the close of the parliamentary session. I was then a member of Parliament. Subsequently Mr. Ballance, another Native Minister of the Crown, went down there to the South Island at my request, I having asked the Government to give effect to the report of Messrs. Smith and Nairn. I pointed out to him (Mr. Ballance) that the Maoris of the South Island had been left landless through the robbery committed by the Government of New Zealand. Mr. Ballance agreed to my request, and visited the South. He found that I was right: he agreed that I was correct in my representations. Mr. Ballance was Native Minister in the Stout-Vogel Government. He agreed to the setting-up of the Royal Commission of Mr. Alexander Mackay. The Maoris naturally again thought something definite would be arrived at. Mr. Mackay went down there, and he simply inquired what Maoris had no land at all. That was the second occasion on which Mr. Mackay was appointed a Commissioner, but there was not a very large attendance of the Native chiefs who appeared before Mr. Mackay. Those who appeared before him said, "We have nothing further to add to what we have already said before Commissioners Smith and Nairn. We said all we had to say then, and we now rely upon the carrying-out of their report." Now, in regard to Mr. Cadman. I said that Mr. Cadman and I visited Otago, Riverton, Waitaki, Te Umukaha, and from there we went on northwards to Kaiapoi; and Mr. Cadman then said that the Maoris were justified in their claims. At each of these places Mr. Cadman replied to the request of the Maoris by saying that the Government would provide the means whereby land would be set apart for them. And the Maoris said to Mr. Cadman, "Well, we have had promises of this kind before. Will anything really be done for us, or will the Government merely do what has been done by previous Governments who made similar promises—namely, trample on our claim and do nothing for us whatever?" Mr. Cadman replied, "No, you need not fear: this Government will not trample on your claim. You need not be afraid; they will keep their promise to provide sufficient land for those of you who are landless or have insufficient land. The proceedings that will be undertaken will be to provide land for those absolutely landless and those who have not sufficient land for their support. If you desire to go to the North Island and occupy land there, the Government will provide or purchase land for you in that Island, so that you may have sufficient land to live upon. If you have a claim to make, make it to Parliament, and Parliament will inquire into it and decide how that claim may be made good with land." I myself acted as interpreter to Mr. Cadman on this occasion right throughout his tour through the South Island. That had nothing to do with the land set apart for landless Maoris. The Maoris all along made a distinct point of the fact that they did not wish this land which Mr. Cadman then promised would be set apart for the landless Maoris