

No. 108.

New Plymouth, 19th May, 1885.

To the Chairman, Public Petitions Committee, Wellington, 1885.

Re *Mr. Joshua Jones and Mokau.*

I BEG leave to state that in January, 1876, when I was Superintendent of the Province of Taranaki, Mr. Joshua Jones called upon me with the desire that I would aid him in opening the Mokau country for the purpose of developing its mineral and pastoral resources. I thereupon entered into a conversation with him on that subject, and pointed out, as clearly as I could, the difficulties which at that time barred my interfering in the Mokau question. Having done so, I remarked to him that I considered the opening of the Mokau district, in a quiet and peaceful way, would be one of the greatest boons which could be conferred on this part of New Zealand; that I should be delighted to hear of its being done, as, I have no doubt, would the General Government also. Mr. Jones told me then that he thought he saw his way to attain this much-desired object, when I further remarked, "If you do, you will be deserving of the consideration and thanks of all who really desire the well-being of the Natives and the prosperity of this part of the colony."

FRED. A. CARRINGTON,
Late Superintendent of Taranaki.

No. 109.

Wellington 7th, November, 1908.

DEAR SIR,—

Mokau Lands Petitions.

You informed me yesterday that you had received a visit on the 5th from Mr. Dalziell, of the firm of Findlay and Dalziell, who informed you that in consequence of the Hon. J. Rigg, M.L.C., having written a letter during the present week to the Premier wherein he recited the report and resolution of the Legislative Council of 9th October last, dealing with my petition, and intimating that as the letter of the honourable gentleman did not disclose the "benefits" supposed to accrue to me under a draft agreement mentioned, the Government had concluded to disregard the recommendation of the Legislative Council in so far as affording me any relief was concerned, but would send the matter on to be dealt with by Sir Robert Stout's Native Lands Commission. You also stated, I believe on Dalziell's *ipse dixit*, that the Hon. Mr. Rigg in writing to the Premier was only "making use" of me in the endeavour to injure the Attorney-General, with whom he was not on friendly terms. You further directed me that I had now—as the Government would render no relief, consequent upon the said letter—better proceed to negotiate with Herrman Lewis (one of those interested in this extortion) as you could do nothing more in the premises. In reply, I say (1) I understood that the Committee intended that the inquiry by Royal Commission should be level-handed and not cumbered with any conditions for or against any side; but I was informed by Mr. Treadwell—who could not possibly have concocted the story—that the Government did not intend to adopt the report of the Committee, neither to appoint a Royal Commission or protect the property from being further dealt with; but that if I choose to agree to certain terms—dictated I understand by the Attorney-General, or the firm of Findlay and Dalziell, acting for Herrman Lewis, and in connection with Travers-Campbell for Flowers' executors—involving the payment of £25,000, and possible loss of the proceeds of sale of 50,000 acres of surface land to the benefit of Herrman Lewis, the Government would facilitate matters, and I should receive the "promise" of two small pieces of freehold (marked on plan) about a tenth part of the entire property, and "promise" of freehold of the minerals on the whole block—quantity unknown. This arrangement came to nothing, and was terminated on 31st October last, when Dalziell informed you that Lewis wanted £11,000, and would not take the £5,000 stipulated. Mr. Rigg did not write to the Premier until last Tuesday, therefore he could not disclose the proposed "benefits" in his letter of a business that had not consummated. Assuming, however, that the terms were in existence when Mr. Rigg wrote, how, I ask, does the inadvertence to state the "benefits" justify the Attorney-General in now assuming a hostile attitude, with threats to my injury? (2.) The Premier in the lower House and the Attorney-General in the Council (*Hansard*) replied to members, "Let Mr. Jones come by petition and have his case investigated by the people's representatives: Jones came by petition as directed, and now he is told by the very man who should hold the scales fairly, that effect will not in any case be given to the report of the Committee, and extraordinary alternatives in the interests of clients of Findlay and Dalziell's were put before him by that firm." (3.) In sending the case to Sir Robert Stout, I have no doubt but what Dr. Findlay is fully aware that he was President of the Appeal Court in July last, and of all that transpired in the case of Herrman Lewis *v.* Jones. Yet the same Judge is selected in the form of a Commissioner to again adjudicate. (4.) The intimation that Mr. Rigg was "making use" of me to damage Dr. Findlay by writing to the Premier is absolutely untrue. In justice to that gentleman I should state that in consequence of the demand made on you by Dalziell on 31st October—raising the claim from £19,000 to £25,000—I applied to Mr. Rigg, the presenter of my petition, to assist me in resisting such extortion. He willingly looked into the matter and said he would write to the Attorney-General; but I took the liberty of suggesting that he write to the Premier as holding the more responsible position. This is exactly how it occurred. I do not believe that there was an iota of the feeling indicated by you in the mind of Mr. Rigg. His sole desire was to assist me in the quickest way possible. I do not hesitate to say that if Dr. Findlay had carried out, or indicated that he would carry out, the wishes of the Committee there would have been no need for me to trouble Mr. Rigg at all, and might have saved future possible complications.

Mr. Treadwell.

Yours, &c.,

JOSHUA JONES.

P.S.—Herrman Lewis informed me that he and his friends engaged this firm of solicitors specially for this case. Doubtless they thought the game to be worth the candle.—J.J.

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