

D. McLean, Esq.

29 Sept. 1860.

140. But this desire was not fulfilled by having a Magistrate non-resident?—I have already said that I do not remember they made a point of having a Resident Magistrate: it probably was so.

141. You have spoken of a meeting at Mangarei about grass seed?—No, not a meeting: I only said the chiefs there on a certain occasion protested.

142. Who were the chiefs?—Te Wherowhero (Potatau), and some of his immediate adherents. This was some time in 1858.

143. Would you state as nearly as you can recollect whether the complaints of Te Wherowhero were frequently made, or on only one occasion?—I have a distinct recollection of one occasion.

144. I should like to know what generally the Native idea was about the grass seed?—The idea they had was, that the Government had some intention with regard to their lands. I believe another idea that prevailed with them at that time was, that the supply of grass seed was likely to bring forward some of the subordinate classes, and place them in a position of independence of their chiefs, and lead to their preferring claims to land which the chiefs could not recognize.

145. Can you name any other objecting chiefs besides Potatau?—I have no distinct recollection of any except Potatau, though it was the subject of discussion among themselves.

146. Did you in consequence of this protest of Potatau's, counter-order the grass seed?—Yes: while Te Wherowhero was so decidedly opposed to it, I recommended that Government should not move in the matter in any way calculated to offend him.

147. Was this because Te Wherowhero was a faithful ally?—He was a faithful ally.

148. Was he not of rather a doubtful character as an ally?—He was never considered so, but was thought to be a very faithful friend and protector of the Europeans.

149. Did you make yourself acquainted with the opinions of those who desired the grass seed, before you countermanded it?—I wrote an article in the *Maori Messenger* recommending the Natives generally to sow grass seed in their cultivations.

150. Then you approved of the sowing of grass seed?—Yes, I did, generally.

151. Then it was solely in compliance with Potatau's request that you recommended it should not be introduced into Waikato?—It was from a desire not to offend him.

152. You are not aware of any anxiety to have grass seed supplied?—I believe Waata Kukutai was anxious to have grass seed, and applied for a loan from Government to get his farm fenced and sown. I believe there were several other applications in the Native Office for grass seed. Kukutai got his seed and a loan of money to enable him to carry on his farming.

153. For whom was the grass seed intended which was counter-ordered?—I don't know.

154. *Mr. Forsaith.*] Have you any knowledge of the locality for which these grass seeds were desired?—I think it was for abandoned cultivations. I don't know of any particular locality except one, which belonged to Potatau. There was grass seed applied for, for land which Potatau claimed as his property; and he considered himself to have a general claim on various parts of the Waikato.

155. Including the land for which this grass seed was wanted?—He and his followers had a proprietary right over considerable portions of the land, and was acknowledged to have a general control over the rest.

156. Are you aware whether any individual Native or Natives professing to have proprietors' rights subject to the general control of Potatau, were anxious to have grass-seed?—I should have to refer to Office records before answering that.

157. You hold it as a general principle not to be desirable for the Government to act on the wishes of individual Natives, when they clash with the general control vested in the chief?—I am confining my observations to the Waikato districts in particular: and I considered at the time that it would be impolitic to do anything in the Waikato Country, that was not freely approved of by the principal chief.

158. Will you be kind enough to furnish to the Committee a report on the subject of the grass seed, specifying as nearly as you can the names of applicants, the situation of their land, and the names of the opponents to the supply of seed?—I shall be glad to furnish all the information available.

159. *Mr. Williamson.*] You have stated that you wrote an article about sowing grass seed: what was the date?—I don't remember exactly: it was prior to the date of the application from Waikato and prior to Mr. Fenton's appointment. I will look up the article and produce it if I can.

160. Was it after Mr. Fenton's appointment that an application was made for the fifty bushels?—It was after his appointment and at his request; and I took particular care to have the seed selected of the best kind, free from sorrel and other weeds.

161. Do you know any particular Native for whom this application was designed?—It was not I think for any particular Native, but for general distribution.

162. *Mr. Domett.*] Were Potatau and the other chiefs given to understand that they would themselves reap the benefit of pasture land?—Yes; I distinctly informed them of this, and that Government had no other object whatever.

163. Did the Natives object to sowing grass, from the fear of cattle trespass disputes?—I did not hear that objection made; the chief one was the fear that the sowing of pasture land would lead to a subdivision of their tribal lands.

164. *Mr. Forsaith.*] Was there any request made in writing, at the meeting at Paetai, for the introduction of civil government?—No: it was a public meeting.

165. Did they make any suggestions in writing?—They did.

166. Can you supply these?—I will try.

167. As head of the Native Department, did you, on your return from the meeting at Paetai, take steps to fulfil the promise?—The Governor gave directions, immediately after our return from Paetai, that a code of laws should be prepared for their guidance.