

We therefore address this petition to the Assembly, sitting in Parliament in Molesworth Street.

You have all heard about the Rangitikei question, and about the return of Ngatiapa to this side between Rangitikei and Manawatu. One portion of the Ngatiraukawa acquiesced, another was obstinate. The case was heard before the Native Land Court, and by that tribunal the river of Manawatu was declared to be the boundary.

We will now proceed to explain the causes of this dispute which is talked about as the Horowhenua question.

When the Ngatiapa found that Kawana Hunia had got hold of the land between Manawatu and Rangitikei, they came across to this side, to Horowhenua. They came first in April, 1870, and brought with them guns, powder, and bullets. All these guns belonged to the Government. We wrote in that year, 1870, to Mr. McLean a letter, of which we have a copy. It was an application to the Native Minister to request that action might be taken to obtain the guns belonging to the Government. To our letter the Minister for Native Affairs paid no heed. Well, the Maoris themselves went into the matter, and sent back Hunia to Rangitikei. In this year, 1871, in the month of July, Kawana Hunia, Major Kemp, and their people, came back with the Government guns to Horowhenua, and they immediately attempted to drive off Te Whatanui's descendants, who had been living there for forty years. They set fire to houses which had been built in Te Whatanui's time, and which had people inside. The wife of Te Watene Te Kaharunga was dragged out and beaten by Te Paki, a half-caste, with the butt-end of his gun, because she would not go out of the house. The following are the names of the people who were dragged out like pigs by Hunia and his party: Watene Kaharunga and his grown-up son, and his wife Te Kiritiaho, Tirotiro, Te Tahuri and his wife Hariata, with their children. These proceedings gave great pain to all Ngatiraukawa, Ngatiawa, and Ngatitoo; all those tribes set to work to furbish up their old guns, with which to protect themselves. Those tribes did not wish to shed blood, therefore were they long-suffering during these years. The Ngatiraukawa determined to write to the Minister for Native Affairs. Their requests were not complied with. Some chiefs of Ngatiraukawa came down in July, 1871, to request Mr. McLean to go to Horowhenua and put an end to the trouble. He did not go. Subsequently some of the Ngatiraukawa came down and asked Mr. McLean to send back the soldiers of the Government, Major Kemp and Kawana Hunia. The Native Minister replied, Kawana Hunia and Kemp should return to Rangitikei and Whanganui, and Te Watene and his party (that is to say, the old occupiers of Horowhenua) should withdraw to Otaki.

Kawana Hunia and Kemp went away to Rangitikei and Whanganui, but Ngatiraukawa were not willing that Watene should abandon his place Horowhenua, seeing that he belongs to that place, and that his houses and cultivations are there. We have heard lately that Major Kemp and Hunia with their people intend to come back, armed with Government guns, to drive off Te Watene and take his land Horowhenua. We see now that, if fighting should take place, there will be great trouble in the Island. Do not consider that, because this is a fight between two sections of the Native race, it is all right; no, other tribes are looking on, and all the tribes know that that place is a permanent possession of Ngatiraukawa; they also know that the Government supplied the Ngatiapa with guns, in consequence of which this trouble will increase.

Some of us are in great distress, and have begun to think that the Government have no regard for, nor do they draw near to, peaceful people. This tribe (the Ngatiraukawa) have for many years been living in peace, and have been patient through the troubles which have occurred in this Island: they have steadfastly kept to their churches, their schools, and have been faithful to the Queen, and have upheld her laws even up to this year. Our applications to the Government have not been heeded.

We therefore pray your Assembly to show your affection for us by causing the arms and ammunition belonging to the Government to be collected from Ngatiapa, Muaupoko, Rangitane, Whanganui, and other tribes; and also to cause those men Kawana Hunia and Major Kemp to return to their permanent places of residence, Rangitikei and Whanganui, so that we and our European friends may live quietly together in peace. Sufficient.

TAMIHANA TE RAUPARAHA.
HENERE TE HEREKAU.
RAWIRI TE WANUI.

Wellington, 25th September, 1871.