

7. You are Attorney-General and a member of the firm of Findlay, Dalziell, and Co., who are acting in defence of the title?—You say that I am a member of the firm.

8. You admit that the partnership is holding together?—I am out of it, except that I have a small sum annually. I refer you back to what I have said about partners making such arrangements as that.

9. I did not mean to reflect upon either of you. A most important part of the case is the interview with Treadwell. There is a letter from Mr. Jones to Treadwell, in which he says the terms of a settlement were discussed?—I have not seen it.

The following letter was put in:—

Wellington, 24th October, 1908.

DEAR SIR,—

Re *Mokau Lands Petition*.

As some form of agreement is about to be brought forward with a view of a settlement herein, it may be as well to commit to paper the circumstances attending such proposed agreement. Should reference thereto be required at any future time, the Select Committee, as Mr. Treadwell is aware, were unanimous in their reports, and the same was adopted on the 9th instant without dissent or discussion by the Legislative Council. Mr. Treadwell subsequently had personal interviews with the Hon. Dr. Findlay, M.L.C., Attorney-General, who represents the Government in the matter, and also in company with Mr. Dalziell (Dr. Findlay's business partner). I note by the documents that the firm of Findlay and Dalziell are solicitors for Mr. Hermann Lewis in this business, and are also acting in connection with Messrs. Travers and Campbell, solicitors for the executors of the late Wickham Flower in common interests.

It is stipulated, amongst other things, in the proposed agreement that the surface lands, excepting two small reserves for myself, shall be dealt with and sold in areas under the Maori-land laws, the fee-simple of the minerals to be awarded to me, and that after paying necessary costs of purchase of freehold, surveys, &c., the balance shall be devoted (1) either *in toto* to Hermann Lewis or in payment to him of £5,000 (altered to £11,000), at the discretion of the arbitrators to be nominated; (2) that £14,000, with interest, *shall* be paid to the executors of the said Wickham Flower. It must be noted that the moneys payable to Hermann Lewis, whether being the proceeds of the whole area, less the two reserves, or the mentioned said £5,000 (altered to £11,000), are not in return for value received, services performed, or the expenditure of any moneys in connection with this property, but for the simple and only reason that the executors have gone through a form of sale of the properties for no consideration to him—which sale he states to me is not enforceable—to answer some ends of their own. And it will be further noted with respect to the £14,000 that this has to be paid without my being allowed to enter *contra* accounts or claims.

I have strongly impressed upon Mr. Treadwell my objections to such terms, but, in reply, he informs me that his information is that unless I accept them the Government will do nothing in the form of giving effect to the unanimously adopted report of the Legislative Council's Select Committee (*vide* letter, Jones to Treadwell, 9/6/10); *therefore, if I have to submit, it will of necessity be under this compulsion*. It must be remembered that, as set forth in my petition, and fully proven before a Royal Commission in 1888, the Government and its officers were the primary cause of all my trouble. I further understand from Mr. Treadwell that the present Government does not intend to protect the property from further dealings, as recommended in the report.

Will you please reply as to whether the foregoing is a correct version, or am I under any misapprehension? It is quite true, as had been argued, according to the decision of the Appeal Court on the 20th July last I have no rights; but I do not accept that view, neither do I believe does the Parliament of this country. I hold that I have equitable rights that may be made valid.

Yours faithfully,

Messrs. Stafford and Treadwell.

JOSHUA JONES.

10. There is also a letter from Mr. Treadwell to Mr. Jones?—I am not blaming Mr. Jones. I think he has made wrong inferences from some one else.

Mr. Hindmarsh put in the following letter:—

Panama Street, Wellington, 29th October, 1908.

DEAR SIR,—

Re *Mokau Land Petition*.

With reference to your letter of the 24th instant, addressed to us, we cannot say that it quite correctly states what the position is; it would be better for us, therefore, to detail the facts in so far as they appear to be material, so that you can understand the present position.

As you say, the Select Committee reported, and the report was adopted by the Legislative Council, we believe, without discussion or dissent.

The writer several times saw the Attorney-General with reference to the matter, and a perfectly plain intimation was given to him by Dr. Findlay that the Government would not either appoint a Commission to deal with or investigate the allegations in the petition. The Government, of course, cannot prevent dealing with the land, but we had an intimation from Dr. Findlay before the end of the session that no legislation would be introduced.

Mr. Dalziell is acting for Mr. Hermann Lewis, and an agreement has been arrived at provisionally between the writer and him which your statement does not tally with. This agreement, of course, has not yet been completely approved by you, though we have understood from you from time to time that you will acquiesce in its terms. In order that you may quite appreciate what the position is, we enclose a copy of the draft (see note) which we have to-day sent to Messrs. Findlay, Dalziell, and Co. You will see that in some respects it does not accord with what you state in your letter.