

41. *Cross-examined by Mr. Welsh.*] Are you a grantee of any lands leased to Europeans under the Act of 1881?—Yes. I am also in the 1892 Act. I have lands leased under both Acts.

42. What grants are they?—Kaipoko. That is under the Act of 1881. It was leased to Connott under the Act of 1881 for eighteen years by Rennell.

43. What other lands do you hold?—I do not know that I have any other. Mr. Zachariah pays me rent for that one I have mentioned.

44. Do I understand you to say that so far as you are concerned you are not interested in any other lands under the 1881 Act?—Yes.

The Commission adjourned till Thursday next, 30th May, 1912.

HAWERA, THURSDAY, 30TH MAY, 1912.

WAATA WIREMU HIPANGO sworn and examined. (No. 41.)

1. *Mr. Bell.*] You live at Waitara?—Yes.

2. I think you have no land in Taranaki except what you have bought yourself?—Yes, I have none.

3. You were appointed chairman of the union when it was formed in May, 1909?—Yes.

4. And you are still an active member of the committee?—Yes.

5. Will you tell us the reason for the formation of the union?—First, each of the several hapus on the West Coast discussed the various matters applying to them as to the injuries from which they were suffering. Each party having discussed their own parochial matters, they convened a large meeting, which was held at Hawera in May, 1909. A great number of people attended that meeting from Parininihi to Waitotara, and it was by that meeting that I was appointed. I will now explain the objects of that union. Firstly, the question of the lands that had been wrongly taken from the Maoris; secondly, the promises made by the Government which were not carried out; that Christianity should be upheld; that they should urge their children to attend school; and that the landless Maoris should be considered—those Maoris who had practically the same right as those who had been included in the grants; that the lands under the Act of 1881 and 1892 should be returned to them; that the farming and agricultural working of the land should be encouraged; and that committees should be appointed by each hapu to carry out the conclusions arrived at by the union.

6. Have those committees been set up?—Yes, and have done work. Decisions having been arrived at and ratified, a motion was then brought forward to appoint a President, and I proposed that they should elect some elderly man who had the interests of the whole of the people at heart—that is, the people extending from Parininihi to Waitotara, and he was discovered in Kahu Pukoro. On his appointment I rose and congratulated the people, and Kahu Pukoro thanked the people for having elected him, and for having completed the work that we had started to do of combining together for the assistance of the whole, because it was by that unity that they would be able to carry out their wishes and desires. I thought I was capable of diagnosing the position, because I am a man who travels right throughout the district, and I mingle with the people, and then I handed Kahu Pukoro my chair.

7. You told us you are not entitled to any of these West Coast Settlement lands?—None at all.

8. How did it come about that you took an active part in this movement?—Primarily because they looked upon me as a disinterested party who would not favour any one portion of them.

9. You told us that one of the reasons for the formation of the union was that the Government had not fulfilled its promises. Will you give us an instance?—In regard to that I would say that there was one hapu—namely, Ngatitama—who had 1,300 acres set apart for them for their maintenance.

10. Who by?—By the Commissioners, Messrs. Bell and Fox. Only 600 acres were allotted to the people, and I find that 700 acres have been sold by the Public Trustee.

11. Was it sold or leased?—It was sold.

12. Can you give us another instance?—There was some other land, 3,000 acres, allotted to Ngatimutunga.

13. Had they fought against the pakeha?—No, they were not warlike people. That 3,000 acres has been sold by the Public Trustee.

14. The whole of it?—I believe so. That is why those people are landless.

15. Have you any other instance?—Yes, another hapu, Ngatirahiri, were always loyal subjects of the Queen, and received approbation from Governor Grey. Portion of their land was taken.

16. Land which had been set apart for them?—No, land that they were in possession of or that they owned was confiscated although they were subjects of the Queen.

17. Had those lands been given to them by the Bell-Fox Commission?—Awarded to them by their ancestral right. They had an inherent right in certain lands which were awarded to them by the Bell-Fox Commission, and a portion of that was confiscated. Those are the reasons for the setting-up of these committees and the formation of the union.

18. Do you know how much of Ngatirahiri's land was taken?—A large portion—according to the elders about 10,000 acres. It reached to the other side of the mountain from the coast to Upper Waitotara. Waihi was the portion.

19. Now, do you understand what is the question in these proceedings?—Yes. I should like first to complete what I was saying as to the reasons why the committee was set up and the union formed. They proceeded to work, and an application was made in regard to the lands the leases