

Attorney-General, Dr. Findlay, immediately the Committee brought up its report, which I believe was unanimous and adopted unanimously by the Council, informed my solicitor, Mr. Treadwell, that the Government did not intend to give effect to the recommendation. I might say that I was so much astounded at this decision as to be driven to the conclusion that the Hon. Attorney-General would not have hesitated to give full effect to the recommendation had the same been adverse to my interests. I had earnestly hoped that the Government would have been only too ready to direct inquiry into what is, and what I believe the Select Committee upon the evidence before it concluded to be, a grave injustice. I could see no possible reason why inquiry should not be granted, and felt that upon public grounds, irrespective of my own interests, it was absolutely necessary for the whole facts connected with the dealings with this property to be laid before Parliament. I still maintain that opinion. I should say that it was the shortness of time—Parliament being about to dissolve—that precluded the Committee from holding full inquiry. I informed you in my letter of the 11th November that the Attorney-General and his business firm of Findlay and Dalziel, who were solicitors for a Mr. Herrman Lewis, the alleged purchaser of the property, and also acting in the interests of Flower's executors, had put forward certain terms of a proposed compromise as betwixt Herrman Lewis and Flower's executors on the one part and myself on the other part for me to consider, the effect of the said terms being that I should acknowledge certain dealings betwixt those parties in regard to the property as having some validity, but no conclusion was determined and the proposals fell through. I was thereupon informed by Messrs. Findlay and Dalziel that in consequence of this failure the Government would send the case on to the Stout Commission to be dealt with. I should state that this programme had been held before me as an alternative during the negotiations that failed, and I believe it was carried out. I noticed in the *Auckland Weekly News* of 4th March last, page 21, that the Stout Commission was then engaged upon this business.

I submit to the head of the Government that Sir Robert Stout could not fairly be considered a "competent tribunal," or any part of one, as recommended, and I believe intended, by the Committee to inquire into the merits of the petition, or a proper person to have anything more to do in any capacity as far as I am concerned with this land, he having been President of the Court of Appeal that prevented me entering the action—which the English Court held to be maintainable—for redemption of this property, and also refused me leave to appeal to the Privy Council against this his own (in part) decision, thereby compelling me to adopt the most unusual though proper course of memorializing the Supreme Court of Parliament. He would, in fact, be sitting again in furtherance of his own decision that he—with the Attorney-General, who knew the facts—was well aware I had objected to, assuming that he acted as Native Commissioner, irrespective of my petition and interests, which, however, would not be in accordance with what Messrs. Findlay and Dalziel informed me. These are facts connected with the history of this land not applicable to any other Native lands in the Dominion that were not before the Native Commission, and I am the only person now alive aware of them. Sir G. Grey, the Hon. Mr. Sheehan, Rewi, Te Wetere, and Epiha are all dead. But in whatever capacity Sir Robert Stout dealt with the matter, if he really did deal with it, he did not provide himself with the evidence required by the petition for the guidance of Parliament. I was not examined, nor any witnesses or papers.

I again allege that the dealings of the executors with the property are in fraud of me; that the professed sale of the property by them to Herrman Lewis was a dummy sale; that the professed sale by Lewis to the Hawke's Bay land ring and others was also a dummy sale, neither of these having been carried out, or even made enforceable, unless under conditions that did not exist and may never eventuate. These dummy sales, it may be stated, were performed at a period when I was in negotiation with the Dominion Government for the sale of my interests in the estate.

Parliament will shortly be assembling, and I again appeal to the responsible head of the Government to give me the benefit of the report of the Select Committee by appointing a Royal Commission or other competent tribunal to inquire into the merits of the petition.

I have, &c.,

JOSHUA JONES.

Right Hon. Sir Joseph Ward, K.C.M.G., P.C., Premier of New Zealand.

DEAR SIR,—

Prime Minister's Office, Wellington, 26th May, 1909.

I am in receipt of your letter of the 12th May relative to your petition sent to Parliament on the subject of the Mokau lands.

In reply I may say that I have noted the representations you make, and am giving the matter my consideration.

Joshua Jones, Esq., Mokau, Taranaki.

Yours, &c.,

J. G. WARD.

EXHIBIT GGG.

SIR,—

Mokau, Taranaki, 28th June, 1910.

You will kindly note by the attached copy of note to Stafford and Treadwell, written shortly after my return to this country, that there is no foundation for the statement of Mr. Jennings that it was my enormous demands that put the Government off from purchasing my interests in the Mokau property; and, further, that the Government could have secured the property for the State long before the dummy sale to Herrman Lewis in June, 1908.

Yours, &c.,

H. Okey, Esq., M.P.

JOSHUA JONES.