

have expressed an opinion, later told the Committee that the Maori text was 'bad'. He could not see 'what object was to be gained by the circulation of such a paper'.¹⁰

John White, then official translator, provided yet another version with variations in wording and syntax, generally to give the text a stronger relevance in English than the awkward rendering of the newspaper translation. The draft survives in his papers in the Library of the Auckland Institute and Museum, but the original again is missing, as it is from the official file. Two examples may be quoted for comparison—no. 7 for which the White version reads: 'Is it according to English custom to sell the hereditary estates of their ancestors? demand of the Land Purchase Commissioners the English law (or custom) in this case'—and number 9: 'Then what are you (Natives) to do with your wealth that is your land? You must leave it for your Children, so that you act as Europeans do.'¹¹

The *Southern Cross* understood that copies of the circular in envelopes addressed to individual chiefs were handed out in Auckland to be taken up country, a statement repeated by Carleton to the Provincial Council Committee but perhaps in conflict with Grace's claim to Vidal, the Secretary of the local C.M.S. Committee, that 'six copies only have been distributed'. The concern of the editor, to be echoed by McLean, was that the immediate effect would be to 'excite the jealousy of the Aborigenes [sic] with respect to their lands', to give them a false idea of its value and 'to inculcate as a religious duty the expediency of closing up the country'. The effect of the circular would be to 'check their progress in civilisation' and—commercial Auckland's greatest fear—to drive hundreds of intending settlers from Auckland to the south.

Grace's form of presentation was far more skilful than might be thought, despite the fact that a check of the biblical references shows some to be only marginally relevant if not incorrect. Until the original document is seen it can only be said that Grace was perhaps in too great a hurry to select more specific examples. But for over fifteen years the message of the Protestant missionaries had been hammered home to converts and others in a succinct dialectic which referred constantly to appropriate scriptural injunctions. He had clearly given thought to his choice of text and wording as testified by the angry official reaction to what was seen as an embarrassingly effective broadside.

McLean expressed his concern to the Colonial Secretary a few days after the press report, urging an immediate investigation of the circumstances surrounding its issue. He had already brought to official attention

The strong opposition of several of the Native Tribes to the sale of their lands—, the numerous Confederations they are forming in the islands to resist it,—the