

10.] Did Wi Pere write the names of most of the people of Turanga? I am not quite sure but Wi Pere did.

11.] Do you know personally that the people in Poverty Bay consent to the prayer of the Petition? Yes. This is the second year we have tried to carry this point.

12.] Do you know Hoera, Tamati, and Himiona, of the village of Tutuokoroheke, and of the tribe of Aitangaamahaiki? I do know them well. They are related to the same tribe as that to which I belong.

13.] Do you know that their names are attached to this Petition? I was not there at the signing of the names.

14.] Were any Europeans assisting in getting up this Petition, either last year or this? Wyllie, this last year, and the year before the Bishop of Waiapu.

The witness then withdrew.

Mr. RICE next called in and examined.

1.—*Mr. Cracroft Wilson, C.B.*] What is your profession? I am Agent to the Provincial Government of Auckland.

2.] What agency do you conduct? Up to the month of May last I was an Officer of the General Government, and I was Interpreter to the Forces at Tauranga. By letter from Colonel Haultain I ceased at that time to be a servant of the General Government, and since that date I have been an Agent under the Provincial Government of Auckland, and I have been posted to the Poverty Bay District, and I still hold the Governor's Commission as Resident Magistrate and Justice of the Peace, but I have been appointed to no specific district.

3.] What brought you to Wellington? I came under the orders of Mr. Whitaker, the Superintendent of Auckland.

4.] What has been your general occupation at Poverty Bay since you went there? I have been inland to the Petroleum Springs; and I have been investigating the title to those springs, and obtaining general information to the surrounding country.

5.] Do you know anything about these Petitions? I believe I have seen some of the sheets forming this Petition (1400 signatures), and I am aware that Petitions were in preparation at Turanga and the surrounding country.

6.] Were you ever present when the Natives were signing these Petitions? I never was present. On one occasion Wi Pere, of Turanga, showed me some sheets of this Petition.

7.] Can you tell the Committee what means the Natives adopted to obtain signatures to the Petition from Poverty Bay praying for annexation to the Province of Hawke's Bay? I saw a Native named Wi Pera carrying round a Petition for signature.

8.] Do you know how the signatures were attached to the Petition? Only from what I was told by the Natives.

9.] Is it usual for the chief to sign for each Native in the tribe when they have to execute documents of importance? Only in cases where men cannot write themselves.

10.] Do you know any Europeans who have taken an active part in receiving signatures to the Petition referred to? I know of two, Captain Reed and Mr. Wyllie, settlers in the district. The latter was Interpreter to the Forces during the disturbances in the district.

11.] Did you consider they used any improper means in obtaining signatures? I heard them asking the Natives whether they were going to sign the Petition or not.

12.] Was any Petition prepared by Mr. Wyllie for the Natives' signature on this subject? Mr. Wyllie showed me a Petition that he had prepared, but told me that the promoters of the Petition thought it better that it should emanate from the Natives themselves. That document was therefore not used.

1.—*Mr. Ormond.*] You say that you are Agent to the Auckland Provincial Government, were you instructed to use your influence with the Natives to prevent their petitioning for the separation of their district from the Province of Auckland? I was not.

2.] Have you paid money advances to the Natives of that district; if so, for what purposes? I have made advances to the Natives with reference to their rights in connection with the Petroleum Springs.

3.] Was this done as Agent for the Auckland Government? Yes, it was.

4.] Do you know the Native Panapa, and is he now in Wellington? Yes.

5.] Did he come here at your instigation? Yes.

6.] Did he write this letter at your request? No.

7.] What led Panapa, in your opinion, to write this letter? He gave me the letter after a conversation I had with him.

8.] At whose expense did Panapa, Paora Porau, and the other Natives, who came with you, come to Wellington; and is this expense borne by the Auckland Government? The Natives in question came with me to receive advances on account of the rent of the Petroleum Springs. I am at present ignorant whether the Natives or the Auckland Government will ultimately bear the expense; but, in the meantime, the Auckland Government have supplied me with the funds necessary for bringing these Natives to Wellington.

9.] Is Panapa one of the people who has received money payment on account of these springs? Panapa is one of the people who has received money payments on account of the springs; but he had not received any money payments when he gave me the letter above alluded to.

10.] Has he received money on no other account from you, prior to, or since the date of the letter in question? He has received money from me on account of passage and for food.

11.] Would not the dependence of Panapa upon you for support influence his evidence touching the Petition? Not in the slightest. The other two Natives are also dependent upon me.

Witness then withdrew.