

[TRANSLATION.]

To all the Chiefs of the Assembly of New Zealand at Wellington.

This is a petition from all the chiefs of Ngatikahungunu, from Wairarapa to Te Mahia; of Rongowhakaata, from Turanga to Whangara and Tologa Bay, and on to Ngatiporou at Waiapu; thence to Te Kawakawa, to the Ngatiawa at Whakatane, and Ngatirangitahi at Te Matata; also, the Ngatiwhakaue at Rotorua, and Ngatituwharetoa at Taupo, Tongariro, and Patea.

At our meeting at Pakowhai, Hawke's Bay, on the 31st May, 1876, were decided the subjects which our assemblage agreed should be forwarded to the Assembly of New Zealand at Wellington. These are the subjects:—

1. That every publicity should be given to the faithfulness of our allegiance to Queen Victoria, and that we should also publicly declare our desire and consent to work out Her laws at all places and at all times.

2. That it is right and good, in our opinion, that the tribes of New Zealand should be united, and that we should assemble to see each other and to look into our grievances; also, to select what subjects are proper to be laid before the great Parliament of the colony, with a view to their being discussed therein.

3. It is right that a meeting should be held, composed of the chiefs of the North Island, every year, in order to discuss everything affecting or having authority over the Maori people, to look into our grievances, and to consider things affecting us and our land, and lay them before the Parliament of the colony. It will be for the meeting to settle where the next one is to be held.

4. We should select the persons who would suit to be members of the body to carry out the matters agreed to in the second and third paragraphs.

5. We desire that the present Maori representation Act should be repealed—that is to say, the Act which only allows of a few Maori members sitting in Parliament for five years. A new and permanent Act should be passed, making the representation by Maori members of the Native race in the same proportion as the representation is of the European race by European members; and, setting aside the present electoral districts, making the great tribal boundaries the divisions between the new electoral districts.

6. We say that the conduct of Native land sales, or purchases under the Act at present in force, is very confusing and very bad, and that purchases under these regulations should be stopped. Land should not be sold while the original title exists. If the tribe, the hapu, and the chiefs consent to sell, to survey, and to have the title to the land investigated by the Court, in accordance with the approval of all, then only will it be right to survey, to have the title investigated, and to sell. When all do not consent to sell, let no money be paid to the persons owning the land. A stop should also be put to the unauthorized going of Government officers into the Native districts, to urge the Natives to sell their lands or to have them surveyed or passed through the Court. Let the question of the investigation of title to and disposal of their lands rest with the Maori people, to be done when they think fit.

7. We desire that the law which is now in force, and which authorizes the Government to prevent Native lands being sold to private individuals, should be done away with.

8. We desire that all the laws at present in operation under the authority of which the Native Land Court is working should be repealed, and that the Parliament of the colony should pass a clear Act, and one under which Native land matters could be fairly dealt with. It should be provided in that Act that the Judges of the Native Land Court should hold the same *status* as Judges of other permanent Courts, and that the Government should have no authority over such Native Land Court Judges.

9. That we should address a respectful petition to our Queen, praying her to send hither a truthful and upright man to search out and look into the causes of our distress, and to write our statements to our Queen.

The meeting decided that all the subjects above set forth should be laid before Parliament; hence this petition. We ask the great Assembly of the Parliament to carefully look into and consider all the above resolutions, and that they may be agreed to by the Parliament of the Colony of New Zealand.

In token of our consent, we hereunto append our names.

H. M. RANGITAKAIWAHO,
(and 394 others).

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1876.