

through the Court shall be very much lessened in future, so that injury will not be done to the Natives in taking away their land by indirect means. On all these various questions that you have raised to-day I shall take some steps by making inquiry and seeing that the merits of the case are properly ascertained. If I cannot grant your request I shall let you know, and where I can grant your requests I shall be happy to do so.

*Paora Tiunga* said that he was one of the persons who caused trouble in connection with the survey of the Piako Block. The reason he objected to the survey was that he saw that trouble would ensue to the people owning the land. An arrangement has been made with the Ngatimaru, and they have laid off their boundary line; but as soon as their line arrived at the Ngatihako boundary he (*Paora*) stopped it. The reason he obstructed it was that he was not aware that the Ngatihako had any liabilities with the Government in respect of their part.

*Pineaha te Wharekohai* said that he had had no Government money on account of the Piako Block. The Ngatimaru had no money on account of theirs, and the Ngatihako had none on account of their share. The Ngatipaoa had the money. Another question is about the railway that goes round a block called *Te Rae-o-te Papa*. If the railway goes round there he wants to have a clear arrangement made first, as he is not clear about them taking the railway in that place. He complains about the snags that have been taken out of the Waihou River; that is, where they get the eels from. He held on, and would not give them up until Mr. Bryce came, who took them away by force. The Government, through Mr. Bryce, took those things away, and gave no consideration for them. He (*Te Wharekohai*) will have to fell a kahikatea and let it fall into the river so as to make a place for the eels. Mr. Bryce paid the people who worked in the creek to take those things out, but the owners of them received no consideration. *Te Wharekohai* said that this was causing him a great deal of darkness, and if something was not done he would have to fill up that river again with trees. Now the steamers that get up the rivers are continually carrying away the banks; and some Europeans cut down a tree that had some dead bodies in the branches, and they drifted away in the river. Another complaint is about a block of land called *Te Rito-o-te Atua*. The person who got it was not an owner, and the people who owned it were absent from the Court, and they did not get it. There is another block called *Pohututaka*, of which *Te Wharekohai* and his people are the owners, but it was passed through the Court and others got it. Another is *Waihou No. 4 Block*, which was passed through the Court and given to some people other than the owners. He has considered for a number of years past, and decided not to break the law, so he refers these matters to the Native Minister. This *Waihou No. 4* is out of their hands without any good reason. The case was decided in his absence.

*Mr. Ballance*: I will now reply to *Paora*, as he says he desires to go away. He has complained that the survey might affect his interests in the Piako Block, but he has not shown it clearly. How can the interests of the Ngatihako Tribe be ascertained unless the survey is first made? It is the Court that has to ascertain the title, and the Court cannot proceed to ascertain the title until the survey has been made. The fact that he has not received money, and that some have received money, would not affect his claims, for the Court would have power to cut out his block and hand it over to him, giving the other portions to the tribes who had sold their land and received the money. I would, therefore, ask him to reconsider the matter, and see whether he would consent to the survey, and to the Court sitting to ascertain his title. The Government do not wish to press this matter, but will give time for discussion, and I hope they will quickly arrange among themselves so as to allow the survey to go on and the Court to sit. Reference has been made to the survey for the line of railway over the land owned by the speaker. How could the railway affect his land? His land would remain to him after the railway was made, and be more valuable than it was before. The tribes in all parts of the Island are asking for railways, because they know that the railways give increased value to the land. I am afraid, therefore, that our friend is behind the times in objecting to railways. If he will only make inquiry he will see that the making of the railway does not take the land from him. Nothing can dispossess him of the land to which he is entitled; and I strongly advise him to ask that the railway be pushed on before he dies, although I can see that he will live many years yet. I am glad to hear from him that he has considered the advisability of upholding the law. I can assure him in regard to that statement that he is a very much better man than before, for the law will protect both him and his land, and allow not one single acre of land to be taken from him without fair compensation for it. If land were taken on which to build the railway he would be paid for that land according to its value, and therefore he would be a richer man after the railway is made than before. As to the lifting of snags out of the Waihou River for the purpose of improving the navigation, I am sure he will see that that must be a great benefit to him if he has got land on the banks of the river. When I was up the Wanganui River all the Maoris on each side of the river asked that the snags should be taken out of it; they were willing that the eel-weirs should be all removed in order that the steamers might go up and down. Now the value of their lands would be greatly increased, and food, which was scarce before, would be enormously increased. Then, again, his young men would find employment upon the railways and receive money; that would buy sufficient food for them without eels. These are the opinions of the most enlightened amongst the Natives at the present time. He complains that the Land Court has decided adversely to him in some claims, but he admits that he was absent; the responsibility there rests on his own shoulders. Why was he absent? If he had been there he might have maintained his title. The Court is not responsible for absent people; they ought to look after their own rights. In order to prevent people from being taken by surprise in future I have given instructions that all applications to bring land before the Court shall be submitted to the Native Committee of the district, so that in future the people will be able to learn from the Committee whether any of their lands are affected. He will see, therefore, that in all these matters ample provision has been made for the protection of himself and his people.

*Hoani Nahe* said that he would speak about some things that Ngatimaru wished to refer to the Minister. One is the Kauaeranga Bridge. The Maoris have no road to their land, but they have