

view to cornering the market in land for European settlement. Active in this 'land sharking' was John Jones, a self-made Sydney trader, shipowner, and whaling station owner. Jones had a close alliance with southern Ngāi Tahu chiefs led by Tūhawaiki. Jones needed their approval for his whaling stations, and they needed muskets and ammunition for their war with Te Rauparaha, and Sydney merchandise and sailing boats for their coastal trading activities. The southern Māori population was being severely depleted by ship-borne epidemics of measles, influenza, and tuberculosis,³ and Tūhawaiki and his chiefs were increasingly dependent on their Sydney connections for the necessities of trade and war. They welcomed the sudden demand for land sale 'deeds' as a source of funds, but Gipps considered it his duty to protect the Māori people from Sydney land sharks.

In December 1839, Captain William Hobson arrived at Sydney aboard HMS *Druid*, with a commission as British Consul for New Zealand and Lieutenant Governor under Gipps. Hobson had been instructed to negotiate a treaty with the Māori chiefs to pave the way for British sovereignty. On 19 January 1840, Gipps issued proclamations in line with Hobson's instructions. They reiterated the basic principle of British sovereignty regarding property in land: that title can derive only from the Crown.⁴ New Zealand land claims were to be subject to a Land Claims Commission, and further purchases from Māori were disqualified. Wentworth and his supporters denounced Gipps's proclamations as an infringement of British liberties.

Another kind of political contest now emerged in the South Island of New Zealand. In September 1839, Tūhawaiki and his chiefs sailed from Otago to attack Te Rauparaha at Cook Strait.⁵ Te Rauparaha, however, unknown to them, was meeting agents of the New Zealand Company who had arrived aboard the *Tory* with a large consignment of firearms and other attractions. On 25 October, while Tūhawaiki's expedition was mustering at Banks Peninsula, Te Rauparaha signed 'deeds' selling the South Island to the Company as far south as the 43rd parallel, including a third of Ngāi Tahu's tribal territory.⁶

Tūhawaiki's party, evidently getting wind of this, abandoned their expedition and hurried home. On 6 January 1840, over Tūhawaiki's moko, they sold some land to Captain Cattlin of Jones's ship the *Success*.⁷ On 10 January, at Ruapuke, they embarked aboard the *Success* with Jones for Australia. Tūhawaiki wanted to see Governor Gipps 'to have the rights of Ngāi Tahu established and to get the protection of the Queen of England'.⁸ Ngāi Tahu needed all possible support for their claim to be the true proprietors of the South Island.

Reaching Sydney on 27 January, Tūhawaiki and Jones no doubt learned of Gipps's proclamations and Hobson's departure for New Zealand. Gipps was soon in touch with the chiefs on his own account. To further Hobson's objectives, he wanted them, together with some North Island chiefs, to sign a treaty acknowledging