

# **The Public and Political Life of Wiremu Te Kakakura Parata 1871-1906**



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## INTRODUCTION

This report on the public and political life of Wi Te Kakakura Parata has been compiled at the request of the WAI-88/89 claimants. Whereas evidence has been presented to the Waitangi Tribunal that has documented, in some detail, Wi Parata's involvement in local land and other issues at Waikanae, his broader political and public life has not been extensively researched. Yet Parata was a parliamentarian from 1871 to 1875 and, in 1877, he brought a landmark case dealing with Maori educational trust land (*Wi Parata v. Bishop of Wellington*) which produced a significant finding on the status of the Treaty of Waitangi in law. From 1871, through to his death in 1906, Parata was involved in a number of significant Maori policy and land issues: Taranaki and Waikato confiscated lands, Maori representation in Parliament, Parihaka and the initiation of the Maori parliamentary movement of the 1890s.

Within the timeframe and resourcing that has been available, this report has been completed as a very limited exercise only. Only two main sources have been utilised – newspaper articles and the minutes of the New Zealand Parliamentary Debates. As valuable as these two sources are, they of course can not tell the full biographical story of Wi Parata. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the information produced in this report will provide the Tribunal with additional information about this important rangatira who is a key component of the Wai-88/89 claim.

This report is presented in three Sections:

- Parata as a Parliamentarian: Wi Parata was an elected Member of Parliament for five years from 1871 to 1875. The last three of these years, he was a member of the Government. This section covers the years 1871 and 1872, when Parata was an electoral representative only.
- Parata in Government: In December 1872, Parata was appointed a member of the Executive Council. Although not holding a position as Minister, this Cabinet posting, brought Parata within Government until the end of 1875 when he failed to gain re-election.

- Parata as Activist: From 1876, through to his death in 1906, Parata continued his involvement outside of Parliament. He actively was involved in Parihaka, took legal action over Maori educational trust land and was a bedrock member of Maori parliamentary movement.

The sections that deal with the three stages of Wi Parata's public and political life, as revealed in the media and in parliamentary record, follow a chronological presentation with little commentary or analysis. This is saved for a final Summary and Commentary Section at the end of the report. Instead, as this report is being completed for the Wai-88/89 claimants, the intention is to provide as much detail on Parata's words and actions as possible. Therefore, full quotes of his parliamentary speeches or comments in the media are reproduced. Of course, throughout his life, Parata is involved in significant national issues. Within the timeframe and resourcing available, there was little opportunity to review or comment extensively on these national issues. Throughout this report, the focus remains on Parata and his views and participation in these issues. Time did not allow a full contextualisation of Parata's involvement or a review of where Parata sat in respect of these various issues compared with his peers or opponents. There is some small amount of context provided, but this generally is only sufficient to introduce Parata's actions and words. As this is the case, there is not really the information to fully assess Parata's influence or effect on the issues in which he was involved. There certainly is much work that could be done to develop a full biography of Parata and assess his impact in 19th century political life. This report is a mere beginning towards a work of that kind.

## PARATA AS PARLIAMENTARIAN

Wi Te Kakakura Parata was born on Kapiti Island in 1837, the son of chieftainess Metapere Waipunahau, the daughter of Te Rangihiroa. His whakapapa was Ngatiawa and Ngati Toa. His father was the whaler George Stubbs who died in a boating accident soon after Parata's birth. Parata attended the mission school at Otaki. During his twenties, he provided secretarial services to Wi Tako who had become established as a kingitanga leader at Waikanae at the request of the local people. Parata played the role of Wi Tako's secretary during the turbulent times of war and confiscation that continued throughout the 1860s. Later, Parata was identified as a protégé of Wi Tako. In 1871, aged 34, Parata was put forward as a candidate for the Western Maori electorate.

At one of the first electoral meetings relating to the Western Maori seat that was recorded in the press, which took place at Whanganui on 1 February 1871, Wi Parata was nominated as a candidate by Hoani Ngapaki of Waikanae. The nomination was seconded by Enoka Hohepa. The other nominated candidates were leading Whanganui chiefs Keepa te Rangihwinui and Mete Kingi. When the 45 persons present voted, Parata received only two votes – these possibly belonging to the nominator and seconder.<sup>1</sup> When polling occurred two weeks later in Wellington, however, the two Whanganui candidates received only one vote between them with 81 votes going to Parata.<sup>2</sup> By 23 February, Parata had won the Western Maori seat polling 258 votes compared with Te Keepa at 186 and Mete Kingi at 155 votes.<sup>3</sup> During the campaign, Parata was identified by the media as an “intelligent” half-caste who understood and spoke English very well and who had been a protégé of Wi Tako with one paper suggesting that it was through Wi Tako's influence that Parata had won.<sup>4</sup> It had been expected that Te Keepa would have been the victor, but, as one paper suggested, the running of two local Whanganui candidates had split the vote there and that Parata had got through on the votes from Otaki and Wellington.<sup>5</sup> No mention was made of other districts in the Western Maori electorate such as Taranaki and further north. Soon after getting into office, Parata got a Wellington newspaper to publish a speech that he had made on 27 April, possibly at Waikanae, so that his intentions now that he was in office would be communicated to his constituents.

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<sup>1</sup>1 Feb 1871, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>2</sup>14 Feb 1871, *Wellington Independent*, p.2

<sup>3</sup>24 Feb 1871, *Otago Daily Times*, p.2

<sup>4</sup>13 Feb 1871, *Evening Post*, p.2. Also 28 Feb 1871, *North Otago Times*, p.2. And 1 Mar 1871, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>5</sup>11 Mar 1871, *Marlborough Express*, p.5



Listen to me O people, and trouble not yourselves in trying to find the reasons for this day's meeting, for we are assembled to feast, and I wish to celebrate on this occasion my being elected by you as the voice of the people of this district. You have not elected me for my own aggrandisement, or that of my own particular tribe, but to support and propose measures that you may consider for the good of us all. This then is what I propose doing. Many things both good and evil may be proposed in the House of Parliament, and then you will find out whether I am English or Native. If the Government propose good"" measures I will support them; if not, I will vote for the Opposition; but I will not vote against the wishes of the people. One thing I shall propose in the House is to have everything that is said in the House published in Maori so that you may see what is doing there, and that you may know what I ask for. But you must do your part. Do not you be idle and then say that I do and say nothing, for the Europeans generally express their wishes to their representative. This is my advice to you, — leave off being jealous, for this is our great fault. Jealousy is the cause of our being divided. Let us be united, and let our thoughts be one, so that I may be the better able to bring forward the good measures we wish for.<sup>6</sup>

This first Section of the report examines Parata's first two years in Parliament when he was present as an elected member only and before his appointment to the Executive Council in December 1872. During this time, Parata was active in providing extensive comment on a wide range of issues. For Parata, the most significant issue was Taranaki confiscated lands. At every opportunity, Parata would raise the confiscated lands issue, seeking an inquiry, trying to get pardons for 'rebels', guarding against the lands being used for public purposes but particularly exploring any mechanism to get the lands returned.

Parata was also interested in all aspects of the Maori representation issue: increasing the numbers of Maori seats in Parliament, trying to get legislation and debates translated into Maori and seeking appointments of Maori members to the upper chamber (Legislative Council) and into government (Executive Council). In addition, Parata often commented on the administration of Native reserves, and the processes required for participation in the Native Land Court.

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<sup>6</sup>8 May 1871, *Wellington Independent*, p.3

For Parata, 1872 particularly would be a challenging year. As the evidence presented below will show, media comment on Maori parliamentarians was often critical and hostile. In part, there was resentment that the make up of political factions at the time meant that the Maori members potentially held the balance of power in supporting or collapsing ministries. It turned out that 1872 would be a politically volatile year and Parata would find himself in the middle of a political maelstrom where his decision over support or opposition to government would come to assume a disproportionate significance.

### **The 1871 Parliamentary Session**

Parata joined the fifth New Zealand Parliament.<sup>7</sup> The first session of the fifth Parliament opened in August 1871. Political parties were not established in New Zealand until the 1890s. Therefore, anyone attempting to form an administration had to win support directly from individual Members of Parliament. This meant that ministries could be short-lived if support could not be maintained. During Parata's term as a Member of Parliament through to 1875 there were several ministries.<sup>8</sup> When Parata entered Parliament, William Fox was the Premier. This was Fox's third Ministry. It is most remembered for the expansionist economic agenda of the Colonial Treasurer Julius Vogel which involved the borrowing of capital to finance immigration and public works.<sup>9</sup> During Parata's time as a member of Parliament, across three ministries, Donald McLean maintained the position of Minister of Native Affairs.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 14 Aug 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.1

<sup>8</sup> McLean, Gavin, 'Premiers and prime ministers - Premiers, 1856–1891', *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/premiers-and-prime-ministers/page-2> (accessed 31 January 2019)

<sup>9</sup> Sinclair, Keith and Dalziel, Raewyn, 'Fox, William', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, first published in 1990, *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1f15/fox-william> (accessed 31 January 2019)

<sup>10</sup> Ward, Alan, 'McLean, Donald', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, first published in 1990, *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1m38/mclean-donald> (accessed 31 January 2019)

## Confiscation

It was later reported that the main instruction given to Parata from his electorate when he first entered Parliament was to secure a commission of inquiry into confiscated lands.<sup>11</sup> One of Parata's first speeches in the House was in relation to the Education Bill which had been brought forward by the Government. The legislation was broad in its scope but Parata focused on one particular issue within the proposed bill – the utilisation of confiscated Maori land for educational reserves or other educational purposes. It was later reported that during the debate Parata...

...considered it would be inflicting a great injustice to include in the confiscated lands belonging to innocent persons. They had been told that there was but one law for the European and the Maori, but from what he saw by the acts passed by the House there seemed to be one law for the English and another for the Maori. He wished to see the clauses postponed, so that a thorough investigation should take place, simply for the sake of doing justice. The House must be made aware that the passing of the bill as it stood would grieve the native race in both islands of New Zealand. ...The natives rejoiced at the state of peace which at present existed as much as the Government did, and it would be better to postpone this motion for the adoption of conciliatory measures; if this course were not adopted it might be the means of the renewal of hostilities in certain districts.<sup>12</sup>

In response Parata was told by Government Minister William Fitzherbert that the question he had raised “was injudicious, and beyond the scope of the bill before the House.” Native Minister McLean added that the Government “could not entertain for a moment the question of giving up their hold on land confiscated as just punishment for past deeds.”<sup>13</sup>

Undeterred, the following week, during a speech on Maori representation (see below), Parata again raised the issue of returning confiscated lands to Maori.

The House should agree to the proposal brought forward by the Maoris, the confiscated lands should be given back. There are many chiefs, subjects of the Queen, who did not take part in the fighting, and were not consulted before the

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<sup>11</sup>9 June 1871, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>12</sup>9 Sep 1871, *Wellington Independent*, p.3

<sup>13</sup>9 Sep 1871, *Evening Post*, p.2

confiscating Acts were passed. I was sent here by the Maori people, both the good and the bad.<sup>14</sup>

The following month, on 11 October 1871, the House discussed the case of William Jackson who, in August 1863, had been commissioned to raise a corps of men to patrol the Hunua Ranges. In addition to monetary compensation, Jackson and his men had been promised land grants which they had not received. They were now petitioning Parliament.<sup>15</sup> Parata was one of those who spoke during the debate and soon raised the matter of land confiscation. He noted that Maori had suffered from the war and the confiscation. He also suggested that Maori had no idea that their land might ever be confiscated as a result of the fighting. Parata believed that before the war Maori had been promised their land would not be taken away.

The Queen, under the Treaty of Waitangi, in 1840, stated that she would not take the land from the Maori; and Governor Browne also, at the Kohimarama meeting, declared that he would not take any of the land. The Governor declared that no land should be taken at that time; and he (Mr. Parata) was not aware by what law that treaty had been set aside... The Maoris at present did not know by what law that treaty had been set aside. .... He should like to know why the sword of the European should be upheld and the sword of the Maori not. It was said that it was on account of the murders committed by the Maoris that the land had been taken, but the murders by the Europeans had been just as bad.<sup>16</sup>

The other time that Parata raised the matter of land confiscation during his first year in Parliament was on 25 October 1871, when the House was considering a motion regarding Harbour Works at Taranaki. As a representative of Maori constituents who lived within the Province of Taranaki, Parata indicated that he did not object to the proposed works per se, but he did not want to see any of the confiscated lands being set apart as an endowment for the project.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> 15 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.474

<sup>15</sup> 11 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.234

<sup>16</sup> 11 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.234

<sup>17</sup> 25 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.519

## Maori Representation

During Parata's term in Parliament, another ongoing issue that he and the other Maori members were focused on was Maori representation. Following the passing of the Maori Representation Act in 1867, an election of the following year had brought Maori seat representatives into the House for the first time. Therefore, Parata entered the House through only the second election which had included a right to vote for Maori seats. Throughout Parata's tenure in the House, the subject of Maori representation was a matter often discussed. One face of the Maori representation question was the movement inside the House to ensure that those Maori members who were already elected were represented in positions of influence. It is within this context that on 12 September 1871, Parata moved that Wiremu Katene (Northern Maori representative) be added to the Select Committee on Public Petitions. He told Parliament that:

...his object in suggesting the addition of the name of Mr. Katene was that the gentleman might be able to explain to the European members of the Committee the subject of Maori petitions. Many Maori petitions were before the Public Petitions Committee and more would come, and as the only members now upon it were Europeans, they would be unable, unassisted to fully understand the purport of such petitions.<sup>18</sup>

Another member named Kelly responded that he had no objection but expressed the hope that the member proposed to be added only to enable him to discuss any "Native" questions which came before the Committee. It was said that if everything that came before the Committee had to be interpreted to Katene the Committee would not be able to get through its work. Parata responded by confirming: "he only wished that the honorable member should deal with such petitions as referred exclusively to the Maori race". Therefore, the motion was agreed to.<sup>19</sup> Later, on 5 October 1871, when a specific Native Affairs Select Committee was formed, Parata was also appointed as member.<sup>20</sup>

While Maori members inside the House worked to increase their influence on proceedings, outside of Parliament existed a body of opinion that remained opposed to the very concept of

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<sup>18</sup> 12 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.356.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>20</sup> 5 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.124

Maori members of Parliament. For example, the Wellington newspaper *Evening Post* at this time was a major critic of Maori representation in Parliament often using the word ‘farce’ and strongly criticising any suggestion that more Maori seats be created or that Maori be appointed to the Legislative Council or to the Executive.<sup>21</sup> Following a series of articles that had expressed these sorts of opinions, Wi Parata wrote a letter to the newspaper which he requested be published. The editor obliged.

Salutations to you — I desire to express my opinions on certain statements misrepresenting us, which have appeared in your journal. I refer to your statement that some pakeha has put us up to making our proposals. Mr. Editor — Did you ever hear that the Europeans elected us to seats in this Parliament, or did you see, among the list of those who voted, the name of any pakeha? We do not belong to the 'clan McLean'; we belong to the clan Maori. Mr. McLean is a member of the Government, and you belong to the clan pakeha.

I heard during the past years that the Europeans used to ridicule the former Maori members of the House of Representatives; and now that we have been elected, you have chosen to make groundless assertions respecting us.

My European relatives, do not imagine that this Government have put these ideas of ours into our heads. We are men, and the Maoris elected us in order that we might endeavour, in Parliament, to have the laws so administered as not to press too heavily upon the native race.

My friends, the evils under which the Maoris are suffering, have been inflicted under this name “Government,” which you are jeering at.

If you, the writer of this article I allude to, were to assume the reins of Government, would you administer the laws to the satisfaction of the Maoris?

The Government that would receive my hearty support would be the Government which would give back to the Maoris their lands which have been confiscated.

Mr. Editor, which of our measures have been supported by the Government to give you cause for jeering us, seeing that our measures have not yet been discussed and disposed of?

No doubt the Europeans say that the Maoris are still very ignorant, but in reply to that I would state that the Maoris are possessed of quite sufficient ability to bring forward beneficial measures. The only reason why the Maoris are unable to peruse the laws made by the Europeans is the ignorance of your language.

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<sup>21</sup>See for example 12 Sep 1871, *Evening Post*, p.2

I see no force in the saying made use of by you, the Europeans, that the Maoris who were elected to the House were about as useful as blocks of wood or the carved figures in the Maori House attached to the Colonial Museum. Perhaps you are going to make use of that saying with reference to the present Maori members.

If you should ask who have kept the Maoris in ignorance, I say that you, the Europeans, have.<sup>22</sup>

The Editor was less than impressed. Referring to Parata's letter he reiterated the view that Maori representation was "a perfect farce, and its continuance... ridiculous."

Granting that the present native representatives are a superior sample to their predecessors, still it is perfectly preposterous that in the discussion and determination of such vast interests as are now about to be dealt with, men like these should be allowed to take part. It must be borne in mind that parties are very nearly balanced, and such being the case, the native allies of Mr. McLean may turn the scale in divisions that will shortly take place. The Maori representatives, may virtually hold the balance of power, and that three men, ignorant of our language and our laws, without the slightest smattering of political education or idea of the magnitude of the question that their votes may decide, should have, as it were, a British community in their power, is unparalleled in the history of colonisation. It is, of course, all very well for Wi Parata to deny it, but all know by whom the native wires are pulled, and in whose favor the native vote will be recorded. The continuance of burlesque Maori representation means just the addition of so many dummy votes in favor of Mr. McLean.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the existence of views such as these, Parata persisted in urging that Maori parliamentarians had a rightful and useful place in the House and requesting that Pakeha members actively work with Maori members to deal with the issues facing Maori. For example, during the Highway Boards Bill debate, on 12 September 1871, Parata spoke to this issue:

Do not allow the law to be carried out harshly, because the Maoris are at present in trouble, owing to the evils which exist in this island. With regard to the Maoris, let us work for a few years together, so that we can make laws together. It will not do to carry out too fast, laws which will affect the Maoris harshly. The Maoris have now obtained seats in Parliament, and can assist in making the laws.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>9 Sep 1871, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>23</sup>12 Sep 1871, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>24</sup>12 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.359

Aside from urging that the existing Maori members be truly accepted and worked with, the Maori members also sought to extend Maori representation within Parliament and Government. On 15 September 1871, Karaitiana Takamoana (Eastern Maori representative), put forward a wide-ranging motion dealing with Maori representation.

That in the opinion of this House, it is desirable –

1. That the Maori race should be represented in the other branch of the Legislature.
2. That a Maori should be appointed as a member of the Executive Council of the Colony, to advise with the Minister for Native Affairs.
3. That the Maori Representation Act should be amended and the number of Maori members increased to twelve, giving three Maori representatives to each of the present Maori electoral districts: and that Europeans as well as Maoris should have the privilege of voting at elections of Maori members of the House of Representatives.<sup>25</sup>

During the debate, Parata not surprisingly supported the proposed resolutions noting the importance of improved Maori participation in lawmaking for the future of the colony.

We are sent here by the Maori people to tell you all their desires, and if the Europeans agree to the proposals we may bring forward, then the Maoris outside will know we are one people. The Maoris have long since seen that the laws of the Europeans are different from their laws. Now, if the two people are to be one, why should there be a difference in the laws.<sup>26</sup>

Parata noted that the Government did not really consult with Maori over the framing of legislation:

The Europeans have allowed four of us to enter into this House. If you were to give a different title to the Maori representatives in the House it would be right, as our districts are different from those of the Europeans. The Government say that they have been in the habit of consulting Maori chiefs. Why have they not consulted with them formerly in framing the laws which have been framed? If it were a matter of asking for land to be sold to the Europeans, the Maori chiefs would then be applied to; but in the matter of framing laws, the Maori people are applied to to assist by giving advice. I now speak in reference to four members being sent to this House. The Maori people of this Island believe this is not a just representation of the Maori race in this House.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> 15 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.471

<sup>26</sup> 15 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.474

<sup>27</sup> 15 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.474



Parata explained that the Maori members wanted to have a broad involvement in Parliamentary work:

We now, therefore, ask that the Maoris should be allowed to take part in all the different divisions of work of this House. Do not be afraid of the number of Maoris asked for this House on the question of expense. If it was a question of an addition to the European representation there would be no fear on the subject of expense. The Maoris should also be allowed to have representatives in the Ministry.<sup>28</sup>

As can be imagined, there was substantial discussion on this motion among Pakeha members. Ultimately, the first resolution was agreed to but the second and third resolutions were not.<sup>29</sup>

As indicated in the *Evening Post* article presented above, one aspect that critics of the establishment of the four electorates latched onto was that the measure had been brought in simply to give the Government at the time, (but also successive Governments), four extra votes the presumption being that Maori members, now receiving a salary, would vote for the Government seen as providing that salary. Although the inherent racism of this argument is obvious to modern ears, the Maori members, instead of dismissing it and ignoring it out of hand, often felt they had to reply to such accusations. An example of this emerged on 22 September 1871 during a debate on the reduction of Government expenditure when Parata dealt with the claim that the Maori members of the House supported the Government because of the money being expended on Maori policy and issues.

I am not going to say, now, whether one Government is good or whether the other Government is bad. I do not wish it to be thought by honorable members that we are supporting altogether the present Government: I do not wish it to be said regarding us that we occupy that position. All Governments are pretty much alike, and I do not think it is right to impute to us that, through a desire for money, we are supporting the present Government. If the money to be expended upon the Maoris were an enormous sum, then it would be right for you to object to the course pursued by this Government.

Parata viewed the criticism over Government spending on Maori issues as a political football that the opposition used to attack the Government and he rejected this:

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<sup>28</sup> 15 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.474

<sup>29</sup> 15 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.477

If you have any objections to make to the Government, do not let the Maori name be brought as a pretext: let your objections be upon a proper basis. We not wish our names to be brought in or to be evilly[sic] spoken of by you in your condemnation of the Government.<sup>30</sup>

He stated that Maori representatives were able to see very well what was right and what was wrong and could decide for themselves on matters. Parata disagreed with those who said that the Maori representatives were “out and out supporters of the Government”. Parata said the critics might have been correct if all the Maori matters that they had brought forward in the House had received “hearty support from the Government”. He concluded by stating that Maori would be happy to not receive money from the Government but on one key condition:

...let the whole of this money proposed to be voted for the Maoris be struck out, if you like; but in that case let all our lands be given back to us to be managed solely by us.<sup>31</sup>

Later in the Session, the matter of cutting back ‘Native Expenditure’ was raised again. On 22 September 1871, a resolution was put to the House by Robert James Creighton that, having regard to the circumstances of the country and the decrease of revenue, that Government expenditure should be greatly reduced. Among the proposed areas for cutbacks that Creighton alluded to were the allegedly high salaries paid to Maori officials.<sup>32</sup> There was considerable discussion in relation to this issue with Parata expressing his views as follows:

It is not the first time we have heard the question talked about; but the question now appears to be as to the corn which is thrown out to the fowls: now that the fowls have become tame, it is proposed that the supply of corn should cease.<sup>33</sup>

Parata reiterated his view that funding for Maori issues could be cut out on one condition: “This expenditure can be all struck off if you like, but let the Maoris have the sole control over their own land.”<sup>34</sup>

On 29 September 1871, the matter of Maori Representation on the Legislative Council was discussed in the Council. One perspective put forward was that if Maori members were

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<sup>30</sup> 22 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.567

<sup>31</sup> 22 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.567

<sup>32</sup> 21 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.556

<sup>33</sup> 22 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.567

<sup>34</sup> 22 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.567

appointed to the Legislative Council they would “be the pliant tools of some one who thoroughly understands their language”.<sup>35</sup> A number of Pakeha representatives disagreed with this view and Robert Stokes gave the example of Wiremu Parata to illustrate his position:

In illustration of what I mean, I may say that Wi Parata, one of the members of the other House, has been taught the English language sufficiently well to understand what is said, but though he can express himself in broken English, yet, either from diffidence or modesty, or from both these motives, he prefers to express himself in his own language. He sufficiently understands, however, all that is said, as may be easily seen by those who have witnessed the debates and have observed the readiness with which he answers any objection or argument of other members...<sup>36</sup>

The matter of the ability of Maori members to follow debates in English would remain an issue that opponents to Maori representation would continue to bring up. Interpreters was not an expense the House was prepared to consider. The translation of legislation was also an issue. On 6 October 1871, Hori Kerei Tairaroa (Southern Maori representative) presented a motion: “That all Bills introduced into the House may be translated into Maori language before discussion takes place on them.” Before discussion on this took place, he amended the motion: “That all Bills or parts of Bills introduced into the House especially affecting Native Affairs be translated into the Maori language, and be referred to the Committee on Native Affairs.”<sup>37</sup> Even this compromise, however, was too much for several Members of Parliament who referred to the length of time and expense that would be incurred if the motion was brought into effect. Parata spoke in support of the motion noting that Tairaroa did not require that the Bills should be printed at this stage but only translated, with printing to be done when the session was concluded. He did not consider that the expense involved should be an issue.<sup>38</sup> Later in the session, during another debate, he changed his mind on this and proposed:

I hope that all Bills affecting the Native race will be translated. These Bills ought to be translated before they are discussed, in order to enable us to discuss them properly, and have the Bills in the Maori language in our hands.<sup>39</sup>

In response, Native Minister McLean explained that “owing to the scarcity of interpreters it was impossible to do more than had been done”.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> 25 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.12

<sup>36</sup> 25 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.12

<sup>37</sup> 6 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, pp.157-158

<sup>38</sup> 6 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.158

<sup>39</sup> 27 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.604

A further issue raised by Parata at the end of his first session in Parliament was that Maori constituents would not know what their Maori representatives had done in the House as the debates were not translated. He had assumed that all their speeches would have been translated but had learned that this was not so.<sup>41</sup>

## **Other Issues**

Aside from the return of confiscated land and the extension of Maori representation, there were several other issues on which Wi Parata provided comment during his first session in Parliament.

At various times, as part of several different debates, Parata commented on the Native Land Court. He especially pointed out that the initial legislation came into effect without consultation with Maori.<sup>42</sup> On 26 October, Parata raised an issue about Crown Grants and surveying noting that it was not clear whether a survey was necessary before title was issued. He used this question as a basis to move onto broader issues: "...it was to the uncertainty felt in these land questions that much of the confusion sometimes arising in the Native Court was attributable." He continued:

It had struck him that the Maoris had not been sufficiently informed of the regulations, a compliance with which was necessary to enable them to bring their cases before the Court in a satisfactory manner; and it must be obvious to everyone that the keeping back or non-explanation of legislation peculiarly affecting the Maoris must naturally result in considerable trouble and dissatisfaction.<sup>43</sup>

In response, Native Minister Donald McLean simply noted that in relation to the Native Lands Act that "the Government had endeavoured to facilitate its operation by making a translation to enable the Maoris to understand all the provisions before the Act passed the House."<sup>44</sup>

On 6 November 1871, Parata again brought up the issue of the Native Land Court not being able to adjudicate on lands the area of which had not been determined by actual survey.<sup>45</sup> When

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<sup>40</sup> 27 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.606

<sup>41</sup> 11 Nov 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.1013

<sup>42</sup> 15 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.474

<sup>43</sup> 26 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.557

<sup>44</sup> 26 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.557

McLean explained that this requirement had featured since the Act of 1865,<sup>46</sup> Parata responded that Maori were not represented in Parliament when the Act was passed and that Native Land Acts should be made afresh now that there was Maori representation.<sup>47</sup> During another debate, Parata explained that the Native Lands Act had turned out for Maori to be something than initially thought: “The explanations in regard to that matter were very clear, and it was made to appear very nice, but when it was printed and explained to us, we found it was very different.”<sup>48</sup>

Another area of policy that Parata brought up several times in his first parliamentary session was the issue of Native Reserves administration and especially the role and work done by the Natives Reserves Commissioner. On 21 September 1871, Parata spoke to the house in relation to the Native Reserves Acts describing the various types of reserves and noting that, at present, they were under the control of a Government-appointed Native Reserves Commissioner.

The Maoris have come to great distress under the working of that Commissioner. If the lands that were given up to him belonged to Europeans they would be very much annoyed. If the Commissioner said, “Your lands may be taken away, and dealt with as I please”, what Maori would have given them up?<sup>49</sup>

He also raised the issue that the Native Reserves Acts were not translated into Maori:

...how is it they are not translated into Maori? That is a fatal objection to those Acts. They should have been translated for the information of the Natives. This question has caused great trouble to the Maoris: it does not cause trouble to those who have taken up arms against Her Majesty, but to the loyal subjects of the Queen.<sup>50</sup>

Parata considered that the Native Reserve Acts should be repealed and the land returned to Maori. He noted that when those interested in the reserves had applied to the Land Court to gain a title their actions have been blocked by the Government due to the fact that the lands were fully under the administration of the Commissioner.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> 6 Nov 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.827

<sup>46</sup> 6 Nov 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.827

<sup>47</sup> 6 Nov 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, pp.827-828.

<sup>48</sup> 27 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.604

<sup>49</sup> 21 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.541

<sup>50</sup> 21 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.541

<sup>51</sup> 21 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.541

In response McLean acknowledged that there were various difficulties connected with Native reserves and indicated that the Government had the subject under its consideration. He indicated that he would be glad to confer with Parata on the matter before the Government introduced a Bill which provided for better management of the Native reserves. Parata approved of the proposal to confer over the legislation:

If the honourable member wishes to have the matter inquired into, I shall be satisfied and will give him all the help I can. The Maoris have represented to the Government that these Acts should be repealed, but the Government have said that they have no power to do so, as these Acts were not made by them but were passed by this House.<sup>52</sup>

The meaning of the last statement is not clear. If the Government held the majority in the House and Council, and had the political will to repeal the Native Reserves legislation, it could be done. Either this had not been properly explained to Parata or he had been misled.

A further example of Parata's views arose on 20 October 1871, when the House discussed the Public Revenues Bill. During the wide-ranging debate on financial matters, Parata referred to country's heavy level of debt and questioned the necessity for further borrowing when it was unclear how the money borrowed previously was going to be repaid. He added further that he would only support further borrowing if the means for the repayment of the money was made clear to him:

People may work hard—and the Natives work very hard—and get very little for it.... Let the borrowing cease; we have already had enough. Let there be no more borrowing, to cause trouble in the land. The Maoris have no money to pay their rates and the taxes necessary to pay the interest on the loans.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> 21 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.541

<sup>53</sup> 20 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.464

## The 1872 Parliamentary Session

By the end of 1871, Parata had survived his first experience of a Parliamentary session. In 1871, Parata attracted comparatively little ‘opinion’ from newspaper commentators compared with what would come the following year. Nevertheless, there are a couple of examples of media comment, however. For example, after Parata’s first days in the House, he was described by one paper as follows:

Parata rose and answered objections with an acuteness which would have argued well for his ultimate parliamentary success had he been an Englishman. His answers were sometimes fallacies, though none the less acute for that.<sup>54</sup>

By fallacies, the paper meant errors of fact. Even the *Evening Post*, the opponent of Maori representation in general, grudgingly acknowledged “....that the present native representatives are a superior sample to their predecessors....”<sup>55</sup>

Parata, and the other representative members, were often broadly criticised for not knowing or acting in accordance with the rules, norms and mores of the House. During one debate near the end of the 1871 session, one Parliamentary member complained of Parata “that he should adhere to the rules of debate and not drag in the confiscated lands on every occasion.”<sup>56</sup> Another story that was later told about Parata was of an incident that occurred during his first year in Parliament further illustrates how his method of dealing with matters might differ from the decorum that was observed within Parliament.

....Mr. D. H. Mervyn, member for Mount Ida, behaved in an obstructive and offensive way at any early hour in the morning, until at last Mr. Wi Parata, one of the Maori members, in all seriousness offered to remove the hon. member bodily by force of arms if the Speaker (Sir. F. D. Bell) would authorise the proceeding. As Mr. Mervyn was a very small man and Wi Parata a very big one, this method of restoring order could have been adopted effectively without any difficulty, but Sir Dillon Bell objected to such a summary solution...<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>1 Nov1871, *Lake Wakatip Mail*, p.3

<sup>55</sup>12 Sept1871, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>56</sup>8 Nov1871, *Lake Wakatip Mail*, p.3

<sup>57</sup>11 July1892, *Evening Post*, p.2

## Hui at Otaki and Parihaka

In 1872, the parliamentary session would resume in July. As this report will show, it would be a dramatic year in Parliament for Parata. Earlier in the year, however, there is evidence of the electorate work he conducted as a member of the House as he attended key local meetings.

On 13 February 1872, Parata spoke at a meeting of Ngati Raukawa held at Otaki. This meeting was attended by around 250 Maori as well as several Europeans including the Superintendent of the Wellington Province William Fitzherbert and the Provincial Secretary. The Superintendent was present at the hui on the invitation of Tamihana Te Rauparaha who wanted to discuss the ongoing land dispute between Ngati Raukawa on one side and Ngatiapa and Rangitane on the other. Tamihana Te Rauparaha and others present indicated that they wanted their land surveyed to assist in settling the dispute and to enable them to sell a portion of it.<sup>58</sup>

The Superintendent noted that it would be the Native Land Court that would decide the ownership of the block. He spoke further on the benefits of land selling contending that the introduction of a European population would progress their kainga and improve their health.<sup>59</sup>

Parata was among those who spoke reminding those assembled of his general position of opposing the Native Lands Court.<sup>60</sup> Parata then addressed the issue of the Superintendent granting “bush licences” in the district allowing the sale of alcohol which he described as “the cause of evil” and “sickness” among Maori. He indicated that he wanted the public houses to be located some distance away from Maori communities. Generally, in matters relating to land, Parata advised those at the meeting to wait and have patience. He advised Tamihana Te Rauparaha to hold a large meeting so that he could hear “the determination of the people”.<sup>61</sup>

In response, the Superintendent indicated that he was glad that Parata approved of caution. While he was anxious on behalf of the Government to acquire the land, he was not anxious to do this unless the owners were willing to cede it. As for bush licences, the Superintendent spent

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<sup>58</sup> 21 Feb 1872, *Wellington Independent*, p.2

<sup>59</sup> 21 Feb 1872, *Wellington Independent*, p.2

<sup>60</sup> 21 Feb 1872, *Wellington Independent*, p.2

<sup>61</sup> 21 Feb 1872, *Wellington Independent*, p.2



some time urging those who were gathered to moderate their alcohol consumption and warning them against excessive use of alcohol.<sup>62</sup> As for Tamihana Te Rauparaha, he did not see the necessity of a further meeting as advised by Parata and expressed a desire that Ngati Raukawa sell their land and obtain the money and other advantages that had been discussed.<sup>63</sup>

The following month, March 1872, Parata spoke at a meeting held at Parihaka. Te Whiti was the principal speaker at the meeting. On this occasion Parata advocated the opening of the road in the area. A newspaper noted that Parata "...seemed to have some influence, and was listened to attentively."<sup>64</sup> It was later reported that at the Parihaka half-yearly meeting later in the year, Parata told those gathered "that he had brought the question of the confiscation before the House without avail, so that he would not give rise to any false expectations, but advised them to come to some settlement with the Government."<sup>65</sup>

## **Maori Representation**

The second session of the fifth Parliament opened on 16 July 1872. Two days later, select committees were appointed and Wiremu Parata was again appointed to the Native Affairs Select Committee.<sup>66</sup> The following day, on 19 July 1872, Wiremu Parata raised a question in the House regarding the representation of Maori in Legislative Council. He explained that he had placed this question upon the Order Paper in consequence of a resolution which had been passed by the House during the previous session. Parata remarked that he considered this a very important matter as there were only four Maori representatives in this House and he asked "...why should Maoris be prevented from entering the other House?" He referred to the lengthy period that had elapsed between sessions and commented that they still did not know whether the Government were willing to accede to the resolution or not. He thought the Native Minister should agree to the proposal as it was "a subject the Maoris think a great deal about and desire very much". He asked the Native Minister, Donald McLean, what steps had been taken by the Government towards carrying into effect the resolution of the last session.<sup>67</sup> McLean responded that the Government "concurred in the advisability of having representatives of the Native race in the

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<sup>62</sup> 21 Feb 1872, *Wellington Independent*, p.2

<sup>63</sup> 21 Feb 1872, *Wellington Independent*, p.2

<sup>64</sup> 25 March 1872, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>65</sup> 24 Jul 1880, *Hawera & Normanby Star*, p.3

<sup>66</sup> 18 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.7

<sup>67</sup> 19 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.17

other branch of the Legislature” and “early measures would be taken to place two members of the Maori race in the other branch of the Legislature”.<sup>68</sup>

The proposal was reported on by some press outlets in a most hostile manner. On 20 July, the *Evening Post* commented on the Government’s planned intention: “Upon the wisdom of this step we have no remark to make at present, but we desire to express our heart-felt sympathy with the noble "lords," whose sacred chamber is about to be invaded by the ‘outer barbarians.’”<sup>69</sup> In the meantime, the *Wanganui Herald* declared “that Mr McLean has ordered the usher of the black rod to lay in a stock of rum and tobacco for the appointed dignitaries, but I am inclined to put these stories down as canards.”<sup>70</sup>

On 13 August 1872, the Maori Representation Bill came before the House for its second reading. The initial 1867 Act had a term of five years and required renewal. This was the purpose of the 1872 Bill. In moving the second reading, McLean spoke of the unanimous feeling evinced in the House five years previously when the Maori Representation Act was introduced. He told the House that from his observations throughout the country generally, he felt certain that the Act had been a great success with Maori with those especially in the North Island having taken “very great interests in the election of members to represent them.” Under the 1872 Bill the former Act was unchanged, except for a clause giving power, in certain cases, to change the boundaries of electoral districts.<sup>71</sup>

In his address to the House regarding the Bill, Sheehan expressed the view that “...if they wished to put the Native representation in that House upon a sound basis, they should gradually extend that representation, so as to given Natives something like a representation commensurate with their numbers in both Islands”. He also proposed that Maori members should represent “not merely arbitrary tracts of country, but kindred and allied tribes”.<sup>72</sup> Wi Parata also supported the Bill. Lengthy discussion then followed involving the appropriate number of representatives. In the end the Bill was viewed as being generally acceptable to most of the Members of the House.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> 19 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.17

<sup>69</sup> 20 July 1872, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>70</sup> 24 July 1872, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>71</sup> 13 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.450

<sup>72</sup> 13 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, pp.450-451

<sup>73</sup> 13 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.451

## Land Confiscation

Early in the 1872 session, the issue of the confiscated lands was brought forward for discussion in a motion put forward by Wiremu Parata who had presented a petition on the subject that had been sent to him from Taranaki. (see below) On 30 July 1872, Parata gave a lengthy speech in relation to this issue. He explained that he had been induced to put the notice on the Order Paper “through the desire of the Maoris in his district that the confiscated lands be returned to them”. He stated that the Europeans said that the Maori were at fault but he pointed out that no investigation had been conducted and therefore this statement had not been proved. Parata again referred to the meeting at Kohimarama when Governor Browne and McLean had spoken of the Queen’s love for Maori. Parata also again commented on the Treaty of Waitangi:

The Treaty of Waitangi and the old laws laid down were referred to by Governor Browne on his arrival. Although the Assembly might say that those were old laws, and had been set aside, still he must say he had seen no new laws to set them aside. The only subjects which had been translated to the Maoris were the Treaty of Waitangi and the Kohimarama Conference. Those the Maoris had in their own language, and according to those it was not right to impose heavy burdens on the Maoris.<sup>74</sup>

Parata then read out several of the statements made by McLean at the meeting at Kohimarama the first being that “The Maori people are defended from all aggressions by any foreign power.” Parata responded by noting that the only aggression shown to Maori had come from the Queen’s subjects: “if some of the Queen's subjects had acted more leniently towards others of the Queen’s subjects there would not have been any of the troubles which had taken place in this Island.”<sup>75</sup>

The effects of broken promises and harsh laws were noted by Parata:

Troubles would not have ensued if those things which were promised to the Maoris had been carried out as they were explained by the ministers of the church. It was through the multiplying of laws laid down for the Natives that trouble had come in these Islands. He would therefore ask that the laws which pressed hardly upon the Maoris, and which had been passed in former times, should now be made more lenient, because now Maoris held seats in Parliament.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.166

<sup>75</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.166

<sup>76</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.166

Parata read out many of McLean's remarks at Kohimarama and then spoke of what had happened since that time:

The Governor and administrators of affairs did not forget to publish those things to the Maoris, but through the desire to obtain land they have been set aside, and new laws had been made.<sup>77</sup>

Parata stated that the desires he had expressed in the House "were the desires of all the Natives in his district, and the Native Minister knew it, for the Natives had spoken to him on the subject". He commented that the laws relating to the confiscation of land were passed when there were only Europeans in the House, and no Maori representatives to give an opinion on them:

He did not wish, in his remarks, to say anything against the Government, but he spoke to the Assembly, and especially to those members who were in it when these laws were passed, and he spoke now because the Maoris had come into the Assembly to help to make laws affecting both Europeans and Maoris. The old laws should, then, be set aside and new ones made.<sup>78</sup>

Parata added: "He hoped the Europeans would show the Maoris some indulgence in that House, because their number was very few and not in proportion to that of the Europeans". The motion was then made by Parata: "That in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the confiscated lands should be returned to the Native owners thereof".<sup>79</sup>

In response to this McLean expressed gladness that Parata had brought this issue to the House as "there was not doubt that that was the really legitimate mode of bringing forward Native grievances, in order that the Assembly might come to a decision upon them." He then responded more directly to the issues raised in Parata's address. McLean acknowledged the words he had spoken at Kohimarama but then added that Maori had been "repeatedly warned that if they went into rebellion their lands would be confiscated." He added that the matter had been brought before the House previously and had been fully considered, but it had been decided that the land could not be returned although any legitimate claims would be considered by the Compensation Court.<sup>80</sup> McLean considered that: "To open up the question anew now after it had been settled would...be very unwise on the part of the Natives..." McLean even claimed that various tribes

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<sup>77</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.167

<sup>78</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.167

<sup>79</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.167

<sup>80</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.167

he had met with also considered "...it would be vastly better that the past should be left alone".<sup>81</sup> McLean then turned the subject around on Parata and advised Maori to act as Parata himself had done after he had brought this question before the House the previous year and found it could not be entertained, he stated that "he [Parata] frankly said so to the Natives when he went amongst them in his district, and recommended them not to take angry steps on account of the confiscated land, but to set themselves to work to open up the country by making roads." McLean concluded: "That was a manly and open course, and he had no doubt the honourable member would repeat the same advice if he found the Assembly could not carry out the proposal in his resolution".<sup>82</sup>

During the ensuing debate, Parata was able to respond to McLean's statements:

It was no matter about the Native Minister saying that he (Mr. Parata) went to his district last year to advise his people. He was always inclined to act that way, but he came to the House to express their views.<sup>83</sup>

He explained that the views he had expressed in relation to the restoration of the confiscated lands were widely held among Maori: "What he had said that evening was not his own opinion only, not the opinion of one tribe, but the opinion of the whole of the tribes of his district." He went on to reassure the House that they were not asking for the return of lands that had been sold to Europeans, but only that had not yet been transferred out of Crown ownership. Parata argued that the Government recognised the justice of his proposal but did not want to accept the financial consequences. He also asked how the Government was going to recompense all the tribes who had returned to peace.

Following this second address by Parata, the motion of returning land was put to the House and failed to pass.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, the issue of confiscated lands was kept before the House by Parata. On 6 August 1872, Parata addressed the House in relation to a petition from Ngati Rahiri which had been presented in a previous session inquiring as to whether there had been any further developments.<sup>85</sup> On 9 August 1872, Parata again raised the issue of confiscated lands in the House. He reassured those assembled that he would not occupy their time as he had already

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<sup>81</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.167

<sup>82</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.167

<sup>83</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.168

<sup>84</sup> 30 July 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.168

<sup>85</sup> 6 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.289

spoken frequently on this subject. He was bringing a further motion forward for the consideration of the House “because the Maoris were in great trouble now about the land which had been confiscated, and they wished that a settlement might be arrived at.” He told the House he did not think this request would be hard to comply with:

He had asked for the lands to be restored under the Treaty of Waitangi, but that was not agreed to, and he now made the application in another form—that was, another form in accordance with English laws.<sup>86</sup>

Parata then requested that a Commission of Inquiry be established. Furthermore he suggested a five-person membership with three Commissioners being Maori. According to Parata, this matter was of such importance to Maori as to warrant the expense involved. He concluded that: “If this proposal were agreed to, the Maoris would be able to appreciate the benefits which they derived from the Maori members being in that House, and would exert themselves to support measures for peace between the two races.” The motion was then put by Parata to appoint a Commission of Inquiry “to inquire into all claims by Natives to confiscated land, and to report upon the best means of restoring such as may be available to the Natives”..<sup>87</sup>

McLean responded that the House had already expressed an opinion in reference to the confiscated lands and stated that “Courts had sat in various parts of the Colony to hear any reasonable and just claims the Natives might wish to bring forward...” He therefore “did not wish to hold out any hopes that the confiscated lands would be restored generally...”<sup>88</sup>

Other representatives in the House also addressed the motion. Of note, considering the developments that would occur over the next few months, Edward Stafford, the representative for Timaru, stated that he agreed with the first part of Parata’s motion about the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry. As to the latter portion of the resolution regarding the return of lands this would be a question for future consideration once those claims had been investigated.<sup>89</sup> The remaining part of Stafford’s speech, which declared an intention to return confiscated lands, would come to influence Parata in his actions in the House later that year:

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<sup>86</sup> 9 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.408

<sup>87</sup> 9 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.408

<sup>88</sup> 9 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.408

<sup>89</sup> 9 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.408

There is a large portion of the confiscated lands now in the position of Mahomet's coffin, and I do not see that we could do better, in order to promote the peace of the country, than to largely divide what remains of those lands among the natives who after fair investigation may be found to have an interest in them. Of course I would make necessary reserves for railways and villages, and where rivers flow into the sea I would make reserves for seaport purposes. I should then institute a process by which it should be ascertained who were fairly entitled to reap some benefit from those portions of the confiscated lands at present unalienated. When the Government has done that, it will have done the best thing it has ever done. It will have got rid of one of the greatest sources of difficulty. I do not suggest that this should be done in answer to any demand of the natives, but as an act of grace and an act of policy.<sup>90</sup>

Sheehan, the representative for Rodney moved an amendment: “That it be an instruction to the Committee on Native Affairs to report to this House upon the desirability of establishing a Commission for the purpose of inquiry into all claims made by Native to confiscated lands”.<sup>91</sup> McLean accepted the amendment proposed by Sheehan. Parata also accepted the amendment but took the opportunity to criticise the operation of the Compensation Courts and advocate for those people who had not been able to attend those Courts. The amendment put forward by Sheehan was agreed to by the House.<sup>92</sup>

### **The Fall of the Fox Ministry**

During the 1872 session of Parliament, dramatic events would unfold that resulted in a change of Government. The origins of these events were broad and complicated and would require a full discussion of the political context of the time to gain a full understanding. This can not be done within the limitations of this report. Why the matter is being examined in this report is because Parata and the other Maori members of Parliament, found themselves in a position of holding the balance of power between the government and opposition factions and had to make key decisions on how they would act.

On 21 August 1872, the House of Representatives held an extensive debate regarding Public Works and Immigration policy. During this debate the actions of the Government came under substantial criticism by some Members of Parliament. As a result, Edward Stafford brought

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<sup>90</sup>24 Jul 1880, *Hawera & Normanby Star*, p.3

<sup>91</sup> 9 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.408

<sup>92</sup> 9 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.410

forward a motion proposing three resolutions. The first was that the administration by the present Government of the public works and immigration policy has been unsatisfactory. The second and third effectively suggested that the administration of the government had been generally inefficient and ineffective. These resolutions aimed to provoke a broad discussion that had the potential to bring down the Government if a vote of no confidence was passed.<sup>93</sup>

In the wide ranging debate that followed, all aspects of the Government's policies and actions were reviewed. As part of this discussion Parata addressed the House regarding those aspects of government policy that he was critical of.

This is an occasion in which the faults of the Government may be spoken of, so I intend to speak my mind upon their faults in regard to Native matters. On our first taking our seats in this House, the Maoris told us what things they wished us to bring forward to be granted by the Government and this House. Certain of their lands have been tied up by the Government. I am not speaking of the lands that have been taken, or that have been purchased or returned to them by the Government, but of their own lands. This House has heard all that the Maoris have said on previous occasions on which they have spoken, and it knows that the most important subject to the Maoris is their land.<sup>94</sup>

Parata acknowledged that some of the laws he was referring to were made by previous Parliaments and had been administered by previous Governments. Nevertheless, he noted that it was the "present Government" that "introduced the system of Road Boards affecting the Natives...taking away of authority over Maori lands..." Parata also referred to the Native Land Court as a continuing problem area and complained that laws affecting Maori were not being translated and published. Parata did not appear to hold McLean particularly to blame for these matters noting, "I do not refer specially to the Native Minister; it is through him that this Government is so good as it is." However, Parata was critical of the Premier. Parata therefore supported Stafford's motion adding that he did not think Maori would get any benefit from "supporting this Government".

I think this Government ought to be more kind to the Maoris, because they are, I think, a Maori Government, yet they do not provide for the Maoris; they incline rather to the Europeans. The sole duty of the Native Minister is, I understand, to attend to Native matters and grievances. However, I do not think he carries out his title sufficiently; he inclines more towards the Europeans. A

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<sup>93</sup> 16 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.574

<sup>94</sup> 16 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.595



great many petitions from Natives have been presented, praying that their authority over their lands should be returned to them, but this Government have not granted their request.<sup>95</sup>

Parata expressed some hopes about how things might work differently under a new Government:

I hope that if the new Government comes into power, they will forgive all the past offences of the Maoris. If these offences are forgiven, then peace will be made in this Island, and great good will be the result. If all the offences are forgiven, then affairs in New Zealand will be much better. I think that if the new Government comes into power, they should set aside all that had been done by the previous Government, and introduce a new policy for the Queen's subjects.<sup>96</sup>

Parata also provided some interesting views regarding Government members who spoke the Maori language:

I also think that a new Government ought to be composed of persons unacquainted with the Maori language, because all the quarrels and grievances from which the Natives are suffering are caused by person who are able to speak the Maori language. In Governor Browne's time, the trouble was caused by people who could speak Maori, and it has gone on ever since. I do not think it is at all right that the Maoris should suffer at the hands of persons who are acquainted with their language...<sup>97</sup>

It was reported that after Parata had spoken, there was a "long pause" in the House, followed by a rally of some members chanting "Government! Government!"<sup>98</sup> Another paper also reported the "long and unpleasant pause" following Parata's speech.<sup>99</sup>

Not surprisingly, most newspapers reported on the day's dramatic events. Sensing that the Government was about to fall, various side stories began to circulate. Several involved Parata.

There is a good political joke current respecting costume. It has been noticed that Mr Stafford and his immediate friends and followers most of them wear black velvet coats. It was noticed this morning that Wi Parata, the Maori member for the Western District, had donned one. An Opposition member of the Legislative Council was asked by a lady why he did not wear the livery? Having ascertained what her meaning was, he satisfied the pardonable curiosity

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<sup>95</sup> 16 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.595

<sup>96</sup> 16 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.595

<sup>97</sup> 16 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.595

<sup>98</sup> 22 Aug 1872, *Evening Star*, p.2

<sup>99</sup> 5 Sep 1872, *New Zealand Herald*, p.3

by lamenting that “the would-be wearers were so many, the material was exhausted.”<sup>100</sup>

The ‘Special Reporter’ of the *Wanganui Herald*, when reporting on the day’s events, recorded Parata’s expressed opposition to the Government. This led to a discussion on Parata with the reporter first presenting his personal view about Parata’s appearance and personality.

This is a really fine specimen of a Maori. He is tall and well formed, dresses with taste, and looks very much like a European. His countenance is open and the features regular, the complexion much more approaching the Caucasian than is usual with Maori. The principal point in Parata’s tout ensemble is his hat. It is one of those preposterously large high Californian hats, such as miner’s often delight in, and which give a grotesque appearance to the wearer. Parata’s hat is a curiosity like the wearer. There is an air of waggishness and bonhomie about Parata, and he evidently has a mind of his own. I fancy he has very much disgusted the Ministry by his Opposition. Reports say that some of them have been casting covetous eyes on his little vineyard.<sup>101</sup>

The reporter continued on to point out how, in the power struggle that was occurring, the Maori members found themselves in a position of power.

By the way, the Maori members have been attracting a good deal of attention lately, and they have had a good deal to say for themselves. Where the Ministerialists and the Opposition are so evenly matched the four Maoris have assumed a position of importance and influence. Thus they have been courted, flattered, and cajoled by both sides. Their intelligence and their good behavior have been dilated upon, they have been promised everything they can desire, general amnesty, return of confiscated lands, extended native representation, and seats in the Ministry. There has naturally been great anxiety as to their votes. Now and then my curiosity has led me to make enquiries as to their probable course of action, and to whatever quarter I appeal for information the reply is the same. “The Maoris are right!” I asked the question of a prominent Ministerialist and he whispered in my ear the mysterious communication. I inquired of an Opposition whip, and he led me aside to a retired spot, glanced around cautiously, and in firm tones pronounced the same talismanic words. I heard them spoken on the beach the other night in the midst of hiccups. The astute Maoris had in fact led both sides to believe that they were “right.”

On the other hand, there were some in the media who were less cynical and who earnestly accepted Parata’s view by acknowledging the problems facing Maori.

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<sup>100</sup>23 Aug 1872, *Nelson Evening Mail*, p.2

<sup>101</sup>29 Aug 1872, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

Wi Parata is a credit to his race, and evidently a man of keen tact and sagacity, as his remarks on the evil arising out of the present system of administering native affairs are worthy of an older statesman. The Maories only want letting alone and treating the same as Europeans, and the whole army of officials, who are at present making bad worse, dismissing. The laws of England are quite good enough for white men, and as a natural consequence for other people also. The natives know this and chuckle at the childish way they are treated by men they can outwit without an effort.<sup>102</sup>

On 28 August 1872, the Public Works and Immigration Policy debate resumed. Several members focused their speeches on the Maori members and on Parata. Government Minister Julius Vogel expressed his sorrow “for the persecution to which Maori members are subjected from the other side of the House, while members on this side have carefully abstained from it.”<sup>103</sup> The debate continued on 30 August. William Fitzherbert, referred to the “remarkable speech” upon the Native question by his honorable friend Parata which he then went on to interpolate in a way that was somewhat different to the words actually spoken by Parata:

What was to be deduced from that memorable speech? If there was any lesson to be learnt from it, it is this: that the policy with regard to our Native co-inhabitants was not a policy that would endure, if it were simply on the special grounds that they were to be a people for ever separated by themselves. They declared, “We will no longer live in a land of Goschen, even though it is a land of plenty.” He pleaded with strong native eloquence, that they would prefer to be dealt with by men who were not acquainted with their language; that they did not wish to be treated as isolated and pet individuals. If he could have spoken in our own idiom, he would have said, “My friends, we wish to live with you face to face, upon the same terms as other men, and we do not desire any specialty.”<sup>104</sup>

On 5 September 1872, the Public Works and Immigration policy was again under discussion with much of the debate focussed on those who supported and who opposed the Fox Government. Within this context Stafford remarked he had received numerous letters from Maori which demonstrated a “very remarkable agreement of opinion”. He commented that whichever way the Maori members of the House were going to vote - for or against the Government - they had all expressed dissatisfaction “more or less, in their speeches”. He stated that one of their most remarkable expressions of opinion was that they wanted a man who could not speak Maori. He noted that he had to pay attention to this view as it had been brought up so frequently and now had been confirmed in the speech by Parata. Stafford also referred to a great

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<sup>102</sup>21 Aug 1872, *Wanganui Chronicle* as reported on 11 Sep 1872, *Lake Wakatip*, p.3

<sup>103</sup> 28 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.756

<sup>104</sup> 28 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.18

number of other grievances expressed to him by Maori.<sup>105</sup> He promised to give a general amnesty for political offences; that the administration of Native Reserves would be entrusted to Maori; that there would be a reform of the Native Land Court; that, as much as possible, Maori would be able to deal with their land in the same manner as Europeans did; that there would be an appointment of a Maori leader to provide advice to the Executive Council; that Maori representation would be reviewed; and that a Commission of Inquiry would be established into confiscated lands.<sup>106</sup>

On 5 September 1872, the question was put to the House: “That, in the opinion of this House, the administration by the present Government of the public works and immigration policy has been unsatisfactory”. The Ayes won by 40 to 37 with Parata being one of those who voted to the affirmative. The Maori representatives were divided, however, with Takamoana voting alongside Parata, while Katene and Taiaroa voting against.<sup>107</sup> The next two questions, which essentially amounted to a ‘no confidence’ vote, were put to the House with the same result and Parata again voting against the Government.<sup>108</sup>

### **The Rise and Fall of the Stafford Ministry**

As a consequence of these votes, Fox and his Ministers resigned and Stafford was given the task of forming a Ministry. Stafford’s Ministry took charge on 10 September 1872. This was the third Ministry held under Edward William Stafford.<sup>109</sup> On the day that Stafford announced that he would be able to form a Ministry, he announced several of his Executive Council picks. He also declared his intention to appoint two Maori members to the Executive although he did not name the members at this time. Nevertheless, the media was already speculating that Wi Parata would be one of those members.<sup>110</sup> The Stafford Ministry, however, was to be very short-lived.

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<sup>105</sup> 5 Sept 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.153

<sup>106</sup> 16 Sep 1872, *New Zealand Herald*, p.2

<sup>107</sup> 5 Sept 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.155

<sup>108</sup> 5 Sept 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.156

<sup>109</sup> Bohan, Edmund, ‘Stafford, Edward William’, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, first published in 1990, *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1s22/stafford-edward-william> (accessed 31 January 2019)

<sup>110</sup> 14 Sep 1872, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

In the meantime, on 7 September, a “Maori dinner” had been held in Wellington attended by 50 persons including Parata and Wi Katene. It was reported that all speakers unanimously approved the change of Ministry and that an abolition of the Native Land Court was advocated. Emissaries were to be sent out throughout the North Island with news of the defeat of the Ministry and a report of the speeches made at the dinner.<sup>111</sup> Another account of the meeting recorded that it was attended by chiefs from around the country and that Parata’s actions in the House were “highly approved.” Such was the enthusiasm for the apparent promise of the Stafford Ministry that it was decided that overtures be made to the Maori King to give up his isolation and lend his influence to assist the new Government carry out its proposed policies for Maori.<sup>112</sup>

It was at this time that Parata wrote a letter that was sent up the coast and through to Taranaki announcing the expected policy that the new government would follow in respect of confiscated lands. On 12 September 1872, Parata wrote specifically to William McDonnell but intended the message of the letter for wider dissemination:

Friend, salutations. I have received your letter, and you have all heard that the old Government has fallen, and a new Government has come in.

My friends, at last it is to a small extent clear that something may be done for the Maoris and their lands which were taken from them.

Very likely parts will be returned, the parts which have not been taken up.

The parts which have already been sold to Pakehaa cannot be meddled with at present....

From Waingongoro all the way to Taranaki is in reality returned to the Maoris. This is quite decided.<sup>113</sup>

When Parliament resumed, on 13th September, in the Legislative Council Government member Sewell was asked about the new Government’s intention over the restoration of the confiscated lands. He replied that at this time he could not state the particular measures the Government would adopt. When the same question was put in the House to Stafford, he replied that it was not the intention of the Government to abandon all the confiscated land but to use some of it for those public reserve objects that he had previously indicated. When further pressed for details, he responded he could not declare at the present time the definite conclusion that would be reached

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<sup>111</sup>9 Sep 1872, *Evening Star*, p.2

<sup>112</sup>16 Sep 1872, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>113</sup>3 Jun 1880, *Lyttleton Times*, p.6

by the Government over the matter of confiscated lands.<sup>114</sup> These pronouncements, along with other Government responses on other Maori issues, would soon create a backlash among those who initially supported Stafford's Ministry.

Aside from confiscation, one of the themes pursued with the new Government by Parata and the other Maori members was equality between the two races in law in relation to land and how Maori dealt with their lands. For example, on 20 September 1872, during the resumed debate on the Immigration and Public Works Bill, Parata asked "...if the Government would in this Bill repeal the clause relating to the purchase of Native lands, and allow the Natives to sell their lands to whomsoever they pleased."<sup>115</sup> The government response to this request was another somewhat evasive promise to look into things.<sup>116</sup> The matter of Maori owners having the right to sell land to private individuals was also raised within another context by Wi Parata on 27 September 1872.<sup>117</sup>

Parata continued to test the new Ministry with his agenda. On 18 September, he moved the following resolution: "That the office of Commissioner of Native Reserves should be abolished, and that the native owners of such reserves should have full power to deal with them in such manner as they may think fit."<sup>118</sup>

Stafford's promise of pardoning those who fought in the war and return of their land also emerged when, on 2 October 1872, Hori Kerei Taiaroa (Southern Maori representative) put a motion to this effect in relation to the Ngati Ruanui chief Tauroa and the return of confiscated lands in the Patea district.<sup>119</sup> Stafford urged against pressing the matter as he considered that great care needed to be exercised in this matter. McLean explained that the late Government had informed Tauroa and the people who went with him to Dunedin gaol that they could not at that time return to the district "owing to the state of ill-feeling and discontent existing between the two races..." On the other hand, the late Government were not "unmindful of the purpose of making some provision for Tauroa in the form of granting reserve land in the district and that

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<sup>114</sup> 24 Jul 1880, *Hawera & Normanby Star*, p.3

<sup>115</sup> 20 Sept 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.156

<sup>116</sup> 20 Sept 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.156

<sup>117</sup> 27 Sept 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.394

<sup>118</sup> 18 Sep 1872, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>119</sup> 2 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.471

instructions had been given to surveyors to have the land allotted and laid off for this group.<sup>120</sup>

Parata then addressed the House.

During the debate on the want of confidence motion, he [Parata] recommended that all the actions of the late Government should be set aside, and that a new policy should be adopted by the present Government. It was not right that the present Government should refer to what the late Government intended to do, - they should act for themselves; and if the late Government had committed any fault; it should be set aside and a new policy adopted.<sup>121</sup>

Parata argued that the matter did not require a great amount of consideration:

The Government should say whether they were willing to cut off a piece of land for Tauroa and his party or not. It was stated by the late Government and by the present Government, that the lands which were still unsold might be returned to the Natives, but that the lands which were sold or otherwise disposed of could not be returned. He asked that the land might be left alone, that no further surveys might be proceeded with, so that the desire of the Natives who wished the land returned to them might be carried out.<sup>122</sup>

Parata again asked the new Government to “state their intention with regard to those lands, and not to refer to the intentions of the late Government”. He concluded:

The tribes were anxious to know what was to become of them; whether they were to be well or badly treated; whether they were to exist or not.<sup>123</sup>

Stafford responded by saying that he had previously told the House that he “had withdrawn the lands at Patea from sale and was not going to dispose of them.”<sup>124</sup> Other members of the House gave lengthy addresses on the subject of confiscated lands and a range of issues dating from the Treaty of Waitangi. In the end, Government member Fitzherbert suggested that given the significant nature of the subject, Taiaroa should withdraw his motion. Taiaroa replied that this was not a new issue nor would it be very difficult to carry out. He would leave the matter in the hands of the House.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> 2 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.471

<sup>121</sup> 2 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.471

<sup>122</sup> 2 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.471

<sup>123</sup> 2 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.471

<sup>124</sup> 2 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.471

<sup>125</sup> 2 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.477

On 4 October 1872, only a few weeks after gaining office through a slim majority, the Stafford Ministry faced a significant challenge. In the House, Julius Vogel levelled several criticisms against the Stafford Ministry one of which was that "...it was a perilous position to have a Government conducting the affairs of the Colony without a Native Minister, or one who is able to discharge the duties of that office..."<sup>126</sup> Vogel ultimately brought forward a motion: "That this House has no confidence in the present Government". When voted on, this resolution was passed by a majority of two (37 votes to 35). Parata voted affirmatively as did Katene with Taiaroa and Takamoana voting against the motion.<sup>127</sup> Stafford's Ministry was over.

Thereafter, Parata was particularly identified in the media as one of those responsible for the fall of the Stafford Ministry. One editor noted that the Government in the House had the slimmest of a majority and singled out three members who changed their allegiance and lead to Stafford's defeat. Parata was said to be one of these members.

It might be interesting to refer to Wi Parata, though it must be apparent that we leave for the time the field of political principle when dealing with the native members. Parata asked two questions; one, when the Government would make up their minds about the restoration of the Pakakohi hapu to Patea; and the other, when the Government would announce the name of the Maori who was to be taken into the Cabinet. The Government required time to ponder both matters, and refused to announce their intentions then. Parata saw that the Government were not sound on the questions which affected himself, and went over to the Opposition.<sup>128</sup>

One report of the no-confidence vote gave a blow-by-blow account and reported on Parata's actions when the Division to vote was called:

As members filed off on different sides, I noticed that much anxious attention was devoted to Messrs. Wi Parata and J. Shephard. Mr. Donald McLean fixed his eye upon the former, who seemed to quail beneath the glance. Slowly and irresolutely Wi Parata arose and flung himself among the Ayes ; which was the signal for some cheering from the Opposition.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> 4 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.568

<sup>127</sup> 4 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, pp.579-580

<sup>128</sup> 7 Oct 1872, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>129</sup> 12 Oct 1872, *Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*, p.3



Another story of these events has it that when Parata began to move towards the ‘Aye’ lobby, “an ardent follower of Mr. Stafford ...sought to drag him into the “no” lobby, but he declined to go with “the wrong mob.”<sup>130</sup>

Another reporter noted: “Mr Stafford owed his fall to the unscrupulous and sudden rattling of Messrs. Wi Parata and J.Shephard.”The reasons for Parata’s actions were vaguely described as being “in some way connected with a road which he wanted through his land, and which Mr. Stafford did not give him, together with various promises from Mr. McLean, and chiefly the post of Maori adviser to the Government.”A further report also noted Parata and others having “...‘ratted’ to the other side.” This reporter also speculated on the reasons for the actions of the other two ‘rats’. Of Parata, the following was written:

As for Wi Parata no one is very much surprised at him. No one believed him to be burdened with any superfluity of political honesty, and besides a good deal of allowance must be made for a Maori.<sup>131</sup>

The reporter concluded his article on a rather dark note: “It is, however, lamentable that the Government of the country should be sacrificed to the greed of a few unscrupulous place-hunters and political Judas Iscariots.”

In the wake of this vote, Stafford asked Governor George Ferguson Bowen for a dissolution of Parliament, so that an election could be held as he considered that no party in the House at that time was strong enough to command a reliable working majority. Bowen refused Stafford’s request for a dissolution. The Governor asked instead that Stafford and his colleagues continue to hold office until the appointment of successors. On 6 October, Stafford and his Ministers resigned their offices.<sup>132</sup> Fox had already indicated that he did not want to be the Premier or even a member of a new Government. Therefore, Julius Vogel was initially requested by Bowen to form a Government.<sup>133</sup> Following further negotiations, however, it was George Marsden Waterhouse (described as a merchant, pastoralist and politician<sup>134</sup>) who agreed to take on the role of Premier. It has been suggested that he was “too intelligent and scrupulous to enjoy fronting an

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<sup>130</sup> 18 Mar 1873, *New Zealand Herald*, p.3

<sup>131</sup> 12 Oct 1872, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>132</sup> 4 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, pp.581-584; see also Bohan, Edmund, ‘Stafford, Edward William’, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, first published in 1990, *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1s22/stafford-edward-william> (accessed 31 January 2019)

<sup>133</sup> 4 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, p.585.

<sup>134</sup> Tregenza, J.F. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/waterhouse-george-marsden-4806> - accessed 5 February 2019

administration dominated by Julius Vogel” and “predictably soon tired of playing figurehead to Vogel”. So this too was to be a relatively short Ministry. Donald McLean was appointed Native Minister in the new Government.<sup>135</sup>

### **Parata’s Appointment to the Executive**

Parliament resumed its sitting but for only a very short period.

On 22 October 1878, a new native policy emerged when Native Minister McLean put forward a motion that the House consider a message from the Governor that recommended the House “...make provision for the constitution of Local Councils in Native Districts...” McLean told the House that there had been for some time a desire in some parts of the country for more local self-government in Native districts. He added that Parliament had received a great number of petitions from Maori requesting that “they might be allowed to form themselves into Committees to manage their own local affairs, subject to the advice and direction of the Resident Magistrates in the Native districts.”<sup>136</sup> Not surprisingly, Parata supported this Bill. He explained that Maori “...wanted to get authority from the House to act”. Parata told the House that if the Bill was passed, he would propose that the assessors should be done away with and all questions should be left to the Councils to decide. He assured the members of the House in relation to any concerns they might have in relation to expense, indicating that Maori were not asking to be paid, only that “those Councils should have authority from the House, in order that their decisions might be carried into effect”. Parata further remarked: “If these were European Committees they would not be objected to by the House”. He was of the view that if these Committees were appointed, Maori should have the management of their lands given back to them.<sup>137</sup>

Little further business was done in the House, however, on this, or any further matter of Maori policy. Not surprisingly, given the political instability of the time, on 25 October 1872, Parliament was prorogued so ending the second session of the fifth Parliament.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup>George Waterhouse', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/people/george-waterhouse>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 20-Aug-2014

<sup>136</sup>17 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, pp.894-895

<sup>137</sup>17 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, pp.896

<sup>138</sup>17 Oct 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.13, pp.947

Little further is recorded before Christmas in relation to the new Government's native policy. Nevertheless, on 4 December 1872, Wi Parata was appointed to the Executive Council; Wi Katene had been appointed a month earlier.<sup>139</sup>

Some within the media, such as the *Wellington Independent*, applauded the action and the two men chosen.

Both these natives are men of influence amongst the people of their own race, and have proved themselves in their places in the House of Representatives to be men of considerable intelligence, and possessed of liberal views upon all questions affecting the relations between the Maoris and the Europeans... Wi Parata is equally intelligent and liberal in his views [as Katene], and it may be confidently expected that the advice and assistance which he and his colleague will give to the Government will be of great value to the colony and help largely to break down the barriers which have hitherto existed between the Government and the natives. The appointment of these gentlemen cannot fail to exercise a most beneficial influence upon our relations with the natives. It affords in a most emphatic and undoubted manner evidence that the Government are thoroughly in earnest in carrying out the policy of peace and conciliation which they have adopted as one of their cardinal principles.<sup>140</sup>

The sunny disposition of the *Wellington Independent*, however, is subsequently revealed to arise due to their assumptions about the actions that would be taken by Parata and Katene. Describing the appointments as "this new experiment in governing the natives" (possibly not quite the way that Parata and Katene would view their role), the paper, as above, fully expected beneficial results to follow. They acknowledged the independence of Parata and Katene, but did not expect this would result in government policy being foiled:

It is not at all probable that either Katene or Parata will be dummies. They each hold very intelligent views of the relations of the two races, and possess quite sufficient independence of spirit to prevent them becoming mere appendages to the Cabinet. At the same time, their opinions upon native matters accord so completely with the policy of the Ministry that there can be little doubt of perfect unanimity of action.<sup>141</sup>

In fact, another view that emerged when supporting the appointment of Parata and Katene to Executive positions, was related to the belief that the appointed members would play the role of

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<sup>139</sup> Solomon, Hohepa, 'Parata, Wiremu TeKakakura', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, first published in 1993, updated June, 2017, *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/2p5/parata-wiremu-te-kakakura> (accessed 5 February 2019)

<sup>140</sup> 4 Nov 1872, *Wellington Independent*, p.2

<sup>141</sup> 6 Dec 1872, *Wellington Independent*, p.2

messengers of the Government who would effectively communicate Government policy and intentions to Maori. This is reflected in the following extract from a *New Zealand Herald* article.

The presence of Maoris in the Executive, and the calling of two influential chiefs to the Legislative Council, will doubtless soon have the effect of abating the delusive expectations of the Maoris. They will listen to men of their own race whom they respect and trust, when they would not listen to any European ; and we have no doubt that Wi Katene and Wi Parata, as Native Advisors to the Crown, and Wi Tako and Morgan, as Legislative Councillors, will fairly and honestly place the policy of the Government before the Maori people, and obtain their acquiescence to it.<sup>142</sup>

Decades later, when the “experiment” of placing Maori members in the Executive Council, (which came to an end in 1878), was reflected on, it was deemed that McLean’s purpose in appointing Maori members for the Executive was “that they might be active agents in carrying out the Native policy of the Cabinet, which at that time was entirely directed by himself.”<sup>143</sup>

Others took a totally different view of the appointments with the *Otago Daily Times* representing the announcement as providing an explanation for Parata’s ‘ratting’ in the no-confidence vote and suggesting his action as “proof of the versatility of the Maori mind, in making politics a profitable business.”<sup>144</sup> It was often generally expressed by some media that the Government only came into power by “promising a seat in the Ministry to several of the inferior members of the opposite party”.<sup>145</sup>

There was more to it than that however. At a later date, it emerged that Parata accepted the Ministry position once McLean guaranteed him that the promises that Stafford had made in respect of confiscated land would be fully honoured by McLean. As later reported, Parata accepted the Executive Council appointment: “on the distinct understanding with Sir Donald McLean that this promise of Mr Stafford’s should be fulfilled.”<sup>146</sup>

From media reports, however, Parata knew his position as western Maori representative was increasingly becoming vulnerable. As early as October 1872, before any appointment to the

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<sup>142</sup>11 Nov 1872, *New Zealand Herald*, p.2

<sup>143</sup>23 Feb 1892, *Evening Star*, p.2

<sup>144</sup>5 Nov 1872, *Otago Daily Times*, p.2

<sup>145</sup>27 Feb 1874, *Timaru Herald*, p.3

<sup>146</sup>28 Jan 1880, *New Zealand Times*, p.2. Also 3 Jun 1880, *Lyttleton Times*, p.6

Executive Council was confirmed, reports emerged that some of the Maori members were losing support from their constituents:

Takamoana, and Wi Parata are looked upon as traitors to the best interests of their race, It is common to hear Natives ask, “how much did Parata get?” Takamoana is referred to as *Takamoana of the forty pounds*. If a dissolution of Parliament were to happen tomorrow, both would be sent to Coventry by their constituents.<sup>147</sup>

It was later recorded that to try and combat these perspectives from being too widely held, Parata at every opportunity reiterated his understandings on confiscated land as stated in his 12 September 1872 letter and that he did so with McLean’s knowledge and at his instruction.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>147</sup>5 Oct 1872, *Evening Star*, p.2

<sup>148</sup>28 Jan 1880, *New Zealand Times*, p.2.

## **PARATA IN GOVERNMENT**

For Wi Parata, the year 1872 had been a controversial one where he had found himself in the midst of political machinations between those various factions who wished to be the Government. Parata had sought to use the situation to gain leverage for the various issues important to his electorate. He therefore promised allegiance to those who offered, at different times, to fulfil his political agenda. In so doing, however, he drew the attention and criticism of various media commentators. There was also the question of how he would be viewed by his constituents. Parata would soon find out. Only a month after his appointment to the Executive Council, he was involved in a series of hui where he would learn the views of those within his electorate.

This Section of the report also then covers Parata performance in Parliament to ascertain whether being a member within Parliaments brought changes to the views he expressed regarding various issues. Finally, Parata's departure from parliamentary politics is considered through the presentation of various information about his defeat in the 1876 election.

### **Hui of February and March 1873**

Although Parata's appointment to the Executive was expected from the time the Waterhouse Ministry came into power, his actual appointment was made while Parliament was not in session. As noted above, part of deal made around this appointment included the Government apparently being prepared to consider a partial return of some of the land that had been confiscated. Parata had informed his constituents of the possibility of land return when the Stafford government came into power. Early in 1873, the opportunity arose to actually visit places within the Western Maori electorate to inform people that the same arrangement was in place with the Waterhouse Ministry. During February 1873, Wi Parata travelled with Native Minister Donald McLean and Legislative Council member Wi Tako to speak with various Maori groups on the West Coast of the North Island with the primary objective being to settle the confiscated land question and the terms of the general amnesty.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> 8 March 1893, *Otago Witness*, p.5

According to the *Evening Post*, (a newspaper that was not a friend of Parata nor Maori representation), Parata's involvement in the fall of ministeries and his subsequent appointment to the Executive had damaged his standing among Pakeha and Maori.

If any enthusiastic admirer of the present Government fancied the appointment of two- out of the four Maori members in the House of Representatives to seats in the Cabinet would please the natives generally, he must, by this time, have abandoned the pleasing delusion as one of those delightful visions which, seen for a moment, are gone for ever. The Maoris are not to be gulled so easily. They are quite aware that the Hon Wi Parata, for instance, voted to eject Mr. Vogel from office, that a month afterwards he voted to put Mr. Vogel into power again; and that shortly after the close of the session, Mr. Parata was duly sworn in a member of the Executive Council of the Colony. The Maoris are quite as capable of putting two and two together as the Europeans, and their esteem for Mr. Parata is about as high as that felt for the hon[ourable] gentleman by people of our own race. To his countrymen, he is no longer an Israelite, but an Egyptian. He has tasted of the flesh pots, and will henceforth sit down beside them, and continue to eat of their contents. Consequently we find the natives treating him as a mere dependent of Mr. McLean - an humble companion, whose duty it is to echo his master's wishes and do what he is told.<sup>150</sup>

The meetings Parata attended in February and March 1873, would provide him with feedback from his constituency.

### **Hui at Whanganui**

The first stop for Parata, McLean and Wi Takowas at Whanganui where the 1 February meeting discussed land that had been confiscated between the Waitotara and Waingongoro rivers. It was reported that prior to this meeting Wi Parata and Wiremu Tako Ngatata had given the Native Minister great assistance in his negotiations regarding these lands. Their knowledge of the various titles of the different tribes to certain lands, as well as their insight into the disposition of the people involved, was considered to have played a helpful role in the adjustment of several of the questions associated with the confiscated lands.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> 21 Feb 1873, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>151</sup> 12 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2; see also 19 Feb 1873, *Daily Southern Cross*, p.6

At the Whanganui meeting McLean spent some time explaining to Maori who were present the terms relating to the reinstatement of local confiscated lands. He then described the various areas where Pakakohe would be able to return and which areas would be retained by the Government. In consideration of Tauroa's good behaviour and of the "faithful observances of the pledges made by him and his people on their release at Dunedin" they were to be granted a sum of money for the purchase of agricultural instruments to enable them to cultivate the land allotted to them. McLean then told the hui that Ngarauru were to receive all the lands granted to them by the Compensation Court. It was indicated that if this tribe should become short of land, a block of 2,000 acres would be allotted to them on the northwest bank of the Waitotara. There was also a reserve of about 200 acres - a fishing station near Ihupuku – that would be granted.<sup>152</sup>

After some discussion among those at the meeting, Parata spoke to the hui contending that they "ought to be well satisfied" with the plans outlined by McLean. He remarked that he had frequently brought this subject before Parliament and, as a result, "some land has been returned to you". Parata sketched out his views on how matters would proceed in future:

Should any disputes arise between you and the Europeans, go to the law which knows no distinction of race; that is better than fighting. Both sides have tried that and gained nothing by it. You have Captain Blake a man like myself, here to assist you, and I will look after your interests in the Parliament. A different state of things exists now to that which existed formerly, and a more lenient policy is being pursued towards you.<sup>153</sup>

Wi Tako acknowledged that the land was in a different position from what it had been before the fighting but indicated they should move forward and not act in a lawless manner. He commented that the way was clear for Tauroa and his people to return to their land. Te Keepa was not so agreeable, commenting that while Tauroa and his party would "...drink the waters of his own river", there were other tribes that would not. He raised questions about the land on the north side of the Waingongoro indicating that he imagined that as no surveys had been carried out there, that this land was to be returned to Maori. McLean responded that he had no knowledge in relation to the giving back of land north of Waingongoro.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> 8 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.4; see also 19 Feb 1873, *Daily Southern Cross*, p.6

<sup>153</sup> 8 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.4

<sup>154</sup> 8 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.4



The *Daily Southern Cross* provided further details on the political background to the arrangements regarding the confiscated land, referring to previous promises made by Stafford to the Maori members of the house in relation to resolving this issue. It was reported that at the Whanganui meeting:

Parata was enabled to explain to his countrymen the hollowness of the promise made by Mr. Stafford that the promise was made merely to catch the votes of the native members in the House, and that at a later period of the session he put the genuineness of Mr. Stafford's promise to the test.<sup>155</sup>

According to reports of the hui, after deliberation the terms offered were agreed to.<sup>156</sup>

### **Parihaka Hui**

It was intended that the party was then expected to travel on the coast road to New Plymouth but it was reported that McLean anticipated difficulties as Maori living between the Waingongoro and Stoney Rivers were “not yet advanced in their friendliness sufficiently for him to take the bold stand he took when at Whanganui.” Additionally, it was noted that Te Whiti and those Maori who were “under his influence” were reported to “still hold aloof, and have little or no intercourse with Pakeha...”<sup>157</sup> McLean apparently decided to travel north via another route.

Nevertheless, Parata and Tako did travel by the Coast road and, on the afternoon of 11 February 1893, they reached Te Whiti's village at Parihaka. The rest of that day was spent in the welcoming of Parata and Tako. The following day, Parata requested that the inhabitants of Parihaka assemble in the marae. When they were all assembled, Parata rose and spoke as follows:

This is my day. I have come here to speak upon subjects which have already been discussed here – peace and good-will. These two have emanated from this place...<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> 19 Feb 1873, *Daily Southern Cross*, p.6

<sup>156</sup> 8 March 1873, *Otago Witness*, p.5

<sup>157</sup> 8 March 1873, *Otago Witness*, p.5

<sup>158</sup> 15 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

He indicated that it should not be said that the troubles which had existed were “the work of this man or that”. He told them that he was able to bring peace through their own work, “...the work of Ngatiruanui, Taranaki, and Te Ngatiawa” because it was they who had sent him to Parliament. He concluded his initial address by saying:

Your tribes have been put back on their land, and that is sufficient on my part. It is for you to do the rest. The people have been replaced on the lands at Patea, and other places further north. They have not got all their places, but they have got some of them. I have only been a short time in Parliament, and I have accomplished this.<sup>159</sup>

At this point, one of those at the meeting raised an issue about someone committing a robbery and Parata spent some time talking about this specific issue before speaking more generally on matters of law and order:

Let your enmity against each other, and against the Europeans, cease. I am speaking of what you ought to do in the future. Do not take the law into your own hands. If you do anything wrong to the Europeans, even an offence for which death will be the punishment, give the offender up to be dealt with by the law. Do not say that the law will make any distinction in favour of the Europeans.<sup>160</sup>

At this point in the meeting a conversation commenced between Te Whiti and Parata:

Te Whiti: You are standing on a high mountain; you are not coming here as a Maori.

Wi Parata: I have come here because I was placed in a position to do so by yourselves.

Te Whiti: We do not understand what you say. Those are new words coming, I suppose from the Europeans.

Wi Parata: They are not.

Te Whiti: You cannot divest yourself of our black skin. You are Maori. What you say comes from the other side.

Wi Parata: What are you going to do on your side?

Te Whiti: We do not know that the Maoris are supreme.

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<sup>159</sup> 15 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>160</sup> 15 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

Wi Parata: There is no one free from the fault of doing wrong. If Mr Parris were to do anything wrong, you would not accuse him alone; you would include all Europeans in your accusation.

Te Whiti: Yes, that accusation would be made.

Wi Parata: You are disputing about the land.

Te Whiti: Yes, that is the question. We want to have everything clear.

Wi Parata: There are two races in this island. How can everything be made right in one day?

Te Whiti: Your word about making peace is good.

Wi Parata: I am not going back to things that have been done formerly.<sup>161</sup>

Te Whiti agreed not to dispute what Parata had said but appeared to make reference to Parata's inexperience as a new Member of Parliament. Te Whiti also seemed to have a more cynical outlook on the relationship between European and Maori:

You have everything in your hands, the land, the fighting, and the peace making. It is not right for a new born child to make arrangements. I don't dispute what you have said, but there may be others who will. It cannot be said that there is knowledge in all the statements made by the people of both races in this island. There is no one who does not look upon Maoris with disdain, on account of their colour and odour. There is no Maori who is wise enough to seek for what will benefit the whole of his people. He seeks for what will benefit himself.<sup>162</sup>

Wi Tako indicated that he had nothing to say, but added the following remarks:

The words are with Wi Parata. What he has said is all. We came here to see you, and it is for you two to argue. You are a new man, and so is he. I am one of the old ones...<sup>163</sup>

Te Whiti then spoke again:

A bush pig does not herd with tame pigs. We are like bush pigs. The bush pig makes his own lair, and the tame pig has come to hunt for it. The bee makes

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<sup>161</sup> 15 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2; see also 8 March 1873, *Otago Witness*, p.5

<sup>162</sup> 15 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2; see also 8 March 1873, *Otago Witness*, p.5

<sup>163</sup> 15 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

food for himself – when man discovered that it was sweet, he sought for it and took it.<sup>164</sup>

At this point the meeting was adjourned for a time and on resuming Te Whiti addressed Parata again:

Your peace-making is correct for this day, but I wish you to understand that although peace may be made between the Governor and the King, it may not be binding upon those who are under them; some of their people may commit a breach of the peace. If it could be made binding upon those, everything would be clear. What I mean is, that some act of treachery might be committed on either side, without the connivance of the supreme authorities. What you have said is the decision which has been arrived at in the Parliament. I think that I am the man in whose hands it rests to make peace. Do not think that I am disputing the correctness of what you have said. It is very clear, for this day you have not presumed to say it without authority.<sup>165</sup>

Reports of the hui expressed views of what it all meant. The *Evening Post*, not a friend of Parata nor Maori representation, suggested that Parata's words at Parihaka "did not fall with that weight which they might have carried had he been addressing the people as an independent member of the Assembly." Given this, and the paper's views on Parata as expressed above, the editor posed the following view: "Mr. Parata thus stands in this position; the Europeans do not want him, and the Maoris will not have him. Of what use then is he in the Cabinet?"<sup>166</sup>

### **Meetings at New Plymouth**

On 15 February 1873, Parata attended a meeting at New Plymouth along with the Native Minister, Wi Tako and Robert Reid Parris, the Civil Commissioner. This meeting was held at the Freemason's Hall and involved members of the Ngati Ruanui, Ngati Awa, Puketapu and Taranaki tribes. Parris told the Maori attendees that McLean had come to hear what they had to say and invited them to speak. Several Maori welcomed McLean and spoke of land they had interests in. Rangitautahi spoke of a previous meeting with Wi Parata where he asked him for the land between Okurukuru and Kai-iwi. He noted that Parata did not agree to this. Rangitautahi continued as follows:

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<sup>164</sup> 15 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2; see also 8 March 1873, *Otago Witness*, p.5

<sup>165</sup> 15 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2; see also 8 March 1873, *Otago Witness*, p.5

<sup>166</sup> 21 Feb 1873, *Evening Post*, p.2

I then asked for the land on the other side of Waingongoro. He told us that nothing could be done about it there, but that we were to come to New Plymouth. That is why I have come.<sup>167</sup>

Rangitautahi asked McLean to restore to them their land on the southern side of Waingongoro. A number of those as the meeting appeared to have overlapping interests in land which caused some debate. In the end, McLean spoke to Ngatiruanui and Taranaki, indicating that he would speak to Puketapu and Ngati Awa on another occasion. He advised them to turn away from war and look to the law in cases where they considered themselves aggrieved. He commented that the question about the land south of Waingongoro had already been settled and noted that Wi Parata had informed them that arrangements must now be made about the country north of it. McLean counselled them to be moderate in their requests and expectations and to: “Let the law be supreme.”<sup>168</sup>

Several people then spoke on specific pieces of land but McLean suggested that this gathering was only “for the purpose of greeting one another”. Wi Parata then addressed the meeting as follows:

I told you before that the cessation of hostilities was owing to the fact that both parties were tired of fighting. Now for the first time is a proper peace making spoken of. I said to you that we should make all safe as regards the people and leave the land question to be settled afterwards. I told you all this at Oeo, and I told you that I represented Mr. McLean, and you have now heard his words which agree with what I said. Drop that talk about Okurukuru and Kai Iwi. I proposed that you should come to here to New Plymouth in order that we might come to some arrangement regarding you.<sup>169</sup>

Wi Tako also spoke in support of McLean.<sup>170</sup>

On 17 February 1873, Parata was present when the Native Minister met with Ngati Maru. McLean encouraged Ngati Maru to dispose of their unoccupied land so that Europeans could live in unity among them and he spoke of the benefits of roading in the area. During the meeting Parata spoke to those gathered as follows:

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<sup>167</sup> 19 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.3

<sup>168</sup> 19 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.3

<sup>169</sup> 19 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.3

<sup>170</sup> 19 Feb 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.3

Listen, Ngatimaru. I have a few words of advice to give you. Your coming in to the Government should not be through an offer of land. You should come in and give your allegiance without reference to land. You have come in in a proper manner. In your dealings with the land I hope you will be careful not to tread upon what belongs to others.<sup>171</sup>

Some of those at the meeting supported Parata's words, Tumounga responded, "Your words are dear. I will not interfere with what belongs to any one else." Horomona stated: "Your advice is good, Wi Parata. Your words of counsel will be preserved by us..."<sup>172</sup>

The following day, 18 February, McLean addressed Ngati Ruanui. He told them that some of the land which had been taken from them had been disposed of to Pakeha and could not be touched but there was a portion in the hands of the Government and this might be given to Ahitahi, a hapu of Ngati Ruanui. He indicated that acreage would be settled on a future day.<sup>173</sup>

After some discussion, Ngati Ruanui withdrew and Puketapu met with McLean. McLean commented that it was because of Puketapu's kind feelings towards the Pakeha that they were still so numerous. He indicated that when the troubles were disposed of, they could enter into arrangements in relation to gaining compensation for the claims of their relatives at Kapiti and Arapawa. This was followed by a lengthy discussion as to who were the rightful claimants to certain parts. In the end, Wi Parata told Puketapu that they had heard the decision of the Government and it would be carried out.<sup>174</sup>

The next meeting involving McLean took place on the 20 February at Waitara. The newspaper report on this meeting does not make it clear whether Wi Parata was present but it appears likely. One of those at this meeting indicated that he had come because he had heard that McLean and Parata were "going to turn off my Europeans". He commented that he had heard that Parliament had agreed to restore the confiscated lands and they were glad. Some of those present spoke of government promises that had been made to Ngati Rahiri as they had remained loyal. McLean indicated that most of Ngati Rahiri's land had been returned and only about 3,000 acres retained by the Government which was willing to give compensation for the loss of their land.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> 1 March 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>172</sup> 1 March 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>173</sup> 1 March 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>174</sup> 1 March 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>175</sup> 1 March 1873, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

## Waikato Hui: March 1873

During March 1873, Governor Bowen, who was about to leave New Zealand to take up a new posting as Governor of Victoria, travelled to Ngaruawahia to meet with Maori. He was accompanied by McLean. Wi Parata spent the week before the meeting at Te Kuiti reportedly inducing the Kingites to attend.<sup>176</sup> An article in the *Evening Post* commented that although a “considerable number of friendly natives” were in attendance, the Maori King had declined to meet and would be represented by ambassadors instead..<sup>177</sup> In the end it was claimed that “about forty Hau Haus” attended the meeting.<sup>178</sup>

At the Ngaruawahia meeting, the Governor spoke to the Waikato Maori regarding an amnesty, at which point those present at once put forward a claim for confiscated lands. Parata was reported to have joined in these demands as follows:

...the Hon. Wi Parata, one of the Executive, so far ignored his position as to join his fellow-countrymen in their impossible demand. Wi Parata, we regret, has forgotten nothing, as he has learnt nothing, since he became a member of the Legislature. He still thinks that the Maoris, by perseverance, can recover their lands.<sup>179</sup>

Parata was also recorded as saying: “You can’t demand anything from a mountain. Never mind! If this Governor departs, another takes his place. Then, again make your demand”.<sup>180</sup>

These words, and what was perceived as Parata’s general position of supporting Waikato Maori in the claim for confiscated land, led to a frenzy of comment in the media. The *New Zealand Herald*, for example, gave the view that Wi Parata and Wi Tako- “men of unblemished reputation and high spirit” - would be better off to tell their fellow countrymen to “reconcile themselves to the inevitable”.<sup>181</sup>

The *Auckland Star* also reported on Wi Parata’s actions at the Ngaruawahia meeting as follows:

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<sup>176</sup> 12 March 1873, *Press*, p.2

<sup>177</sup> 13 March 1873, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>178</sup> 15 March 1873, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>179</sup> 14 March 1873, *NZ Herald*, p.2

<sup>180</sup> 14 March 1873, *NZ Herald*, p.2

<sup>181</sup> 14 March 1873, *NZ Herald*, p.2

...But there will be few well-wishes to the colony who will not regret the ill-advised, or at least unguarded language of Wi Parata. Although not stated in express language, the impression left by his words on Pakeha minds, and we presume it would be the same on Maori minds, was that by agitation they would ultimately succeed in having the confiscated lands restored.”<sup>182</sup>

The article contended that Parata was suggesting that the inevitable conclusion of ongoing agitation for the return of lands was that sooner or later these demands would be met. It was noted that although Parata’s policies regarding confiscation were already known, the making of these statements at this particular meeting gave them particular significance:

It is true that this is Wi Parata’s policy, and that this known he was taken into the Ministry, and that he consistently advocated these principles in and out of office. But his making such statements to Hauhaus in such circumstances as those at Ngaruawahia, in the presence of Vice-royalty and of his colleague the Defence Minister had unusual significance. According to the European official etiquette such a statement is accepted as the expression of policy and intentions of the ministry, and although indulgence is given to Wi Parata on account of his nationality we question if the same official value and importance will not attach to his words when related in King councils...<sup>183</sup>

It was considered by this newspaper that the effect would be that the King party would feel “encouraged in their policy of isolation, and be led to believe that by unflinchingly adhering to the demand, Waikato will be given back.” This article took the view that the confiscated lands should not be given back as they had come into the possession of the Government under the old principle “...let him take who has the power, and let him keep who can”. It was also pointed out that all the land within the confiscation boundary that was worth anything has already been alienated. The *Auckland Star* further commented that “...whatever may have been intended in the words of Wi Parata, the impression conveyed to Hauhaus must be that by perseverance in isolation and hostility, covert if not overt, they will get back the whole of Waikato”. It was suggested it would have been better if Parata had remained in Wellington than to have made remarks that would encourage the demands made by Maori at the Ngaruawahia meeting.<sup>184</sup>

The *Evening Post* more bluntly reported that at the Ngaruawahia meeting Wi Parata had “...urged the natives to persevere in their demand for the return of the confiscated lands, and

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<sup>182</sup> 14 March 1873, *Auckland Star*, p.2

<sup>183</sup> 14 March 1873, *Auckland Star*, p.2

<sup>184</sup> 14 March 1873, *Auckland Star*, p.2



thus practically sided with the Hau Haus present.”<sup>185</sup> A later article in the same newspaper provided further details on the meeting indicating that Bowen had spoken of the amnesty as though it were to be a treaty between the Government and the Maori King, “...instead of an act of grace from the former to the latter”. It was this announcement that was said to have provoked the demand from the “Hau Haus” present for a return of the confiscated lands. Further comments were made in relation to the role of Wi Parata at the meeting in fostering the demands of the Hauhaus by a most “injudicious speech”. It was noted that Parata...

...instead of supporting the avowed policy of the present Government, and telling the natives that their lands were gone from them forever, urged them to persevere in their demand, and to renew it upon the arrival of the [next] Governor...<sup>186</sup>

It was pointed out that this brought Parata into direct conflict with McLean’s former position:

Wi Parata is a member of the Government, and it will be observed that herein is a vital difference of opinion between him and Mr McLean on an important question of native policy. Surely one of them ought to resign.<sup>187</sup>

A later report from the Auckland correspondent in the *Otago Daily Times* suggested that reports in many of the other newspapers were published from accounts supplied by Government reporters and he contended that “...much of a very important character was suppressed, especially in Wi Parata’s speech.” Therefore, it was reported in this article that:

In the presence of Mr McLean, he [Parata] repeatedly told the Hauhaus that he had striven hard to get them their land returned, and would not cease to do so, but that they must back him, and give the Government no peace or rest till they had gained their point...<sup>188</sup>

The correspondent explained that “Suppressions of this kind are often practised with impunity, but in the present case it has leaked out and is a good deal talked about”.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> 15 March 1873, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>186</sup> 21 March 1873, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>187</sup> 21 March 1873, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>188</sup> 31 March 1873, *Otago Daily Times*, p.3

<sup>189</sup> 31 March 1873, *Otago Daily Times*, p.3

## Parliamentary Sessions

In the aftermath of the Parihaka and Waikato hui, media were outspoken in their criticism of Parata noting that neither he nor fellow Executive Council Member Katene “have exercised any control over the conduct of native affairs, or been more than ‘dummies’.”<sup>190</sup> It was said that when Parata returned to Wellington from Waikato “he has been evidently ostracised by his colleagues.”<sup>191</sup> Another paper reported of Parata “his Ministerial colleagues have quietly ignored him in their proceedings, and treat him with great coldness.”<sup>192</sup> Further comment included:

Does anybody believe that the appointment of Wi Parata and Wi Katene to seats in the Executive has strengthened the hands of the Executive, or reinvigorated the state of our relations with the Natives ? I don't.<sup>193</sup>

Clearly, significant expectations were held of those appointed to the Legislative Council and the Executive, but one article is available which records the difficult time position in which those Maori members were placed:

Wi Tako and Wi Parata complain bitterly that Mr McLean does not tell them anything, but seems to keep everything dark from them. They do not like it, and we should not wonder but what a personal government would be brought to an untimely end by the natives themselves.<sup>194</sup>

Nevertheless, during the 1873 parliamentary session, as will be evident below, Wi Parata wore the public persona of a politician supportive of the Government of which he was a member.

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<sup>190</sup>1 Jul 1873, *Press*, p.3

<sup>191</sup>21 Jun 1873, *Wairarapa Standard*, p.2

<sup>192</sup>1 Jul 1873, *Press*, p.3

<sup>193</sup>21 Jun 1873, *Wairarapa Standard*, p.2

<sup>194</sup>18 Mar 1873, *Waikato Times*, p.3

## 1873

The third session of the fifth Parliament commenced on 15 July 1873. A few months earlier, in March, the Premier Waterhouse had resigned triggering a constitutional crisis. As a result William Fox was appointed to head up a caretaker ministry as Vogel was overseas. Fox stepped down when Vogel returned from New South Wales and formed a new Ministry.<sup>195</sup> Vogel's first ministry commenced on 8 April 1873. He had already been influential within previous Ministries. Vogel is remembered for his policies involving heavy borrowing to build infrastructure (railways, ports and telegraphs) and to lure migrants. A key part of this policy was the rapid and cheap acquisition of Maori land and Vogel was said to have dramatically sped up the Crown purchase of land.<sup>196</sup>

During the 1873 session, the House was officially informed by McLean that at the end of the previous year Katene and Parata had been called to be members of the Executive.<sup>197</sup> Given the comments that had already been reported in the press, it was not surprising that the position of Parata and Katene was soon brought under scrutiny in the House. On 31 July 1873, Member Wakefield presented a number of questions about the Maori Executive members. He asked where they stood as members of the Executive Council and whether they were summoned to attend all Cabinet meetings, or consulted on every subject. Wakefield asked whether Parata and Katene were responsible as Ministers for any statement which they may make at public meetings and whether they were entitled to offer any advice separately from the rest of their colleagues in the Executive Council. Questions about remuneration were also asked.<sup>198</sup>

In response, McLean indicated that : “In all cases affecting the Native race, or any other in which their advice was valuable to the Government, they were always summoned if they were within such as distance to render their attendance possible”. Otherwise, they did not attend Council meetings. The appointments were an experiment that, in McLean's view, was working. McLean

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<sup>195</sup>'George Waterhouse', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/people/george-waterhouse>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 20-Aug-2014; see also 15 July 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.14, p.4

<sup>196</sup>'Julius Vogel', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/people/julius-vogel>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 30-Apr-2018

<sup>197</sup>15 July 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.14, p.5

<sup>198</sup>1 Aug 1873, *Wellington Independent*, p.2

explained that both members had been most active in promoting the settlement of the country in their own districts and in promoting the formation of roads. Of Parata, he noted:

The honorable member for the Western Maori District had also, during the recess, accompanied himself to Native districts and was very energetic in his efforts to bring about a reconciliation of the differences which had arisen between the tribes he represents.<sup>199</sup>

Possibly aware of the furore over Parata's comments in the Waikato, McLean explained that on this occasion Parata merely "desired to persuade the King party to represent their grievances to the Government, not to keep them in the background."<sup>200</sup>

During the course of the 1873 sitting, there is evidence that Parata had indeed moved on several formerly held positions. A formerly ardent opponent of the position of Native Reserves Commissioner, during the 8 August 1873 debate on the Native Reserves Bill, Parata expressed his support for the Bill now that there had been an allowance for the appointment of Maori into official positions to assist the Pakeha Commissioners.<sup>201</sup> Whereas previously he had called for the abolition of the Land Court, he now supported the new Native Land Bill commenting: "If it had not been for the Native Lands Court this Island would not have been in the prosperous state in which it was now."<sup>202</sup> He stated that: "The Native Lands Court had not been brought into force with the intention of wasting the land of the Maoris, but in order that each Maori should have his Crown grant and hold on to this land."<sup>203</sup> He acknowledged that he had raised several points of objection to the Native Lands Court during the previous session, but found no one had supported him. He explained that he had been told the Court was a good thing and this new legislation brought several new innovations. The Bill therefore had his support.<sup>204</sup>

In another matter, however, Parata stated his independence from the Government. On 10 September 1873, the House of Representatives discussed the Floatage of Timber Bill. Parata offered some remarks in relation to this Bill, not as a member of the Executive, "but simply as a member representing a Maori electoral district". He told the House that many petitions had been sent to him by Maori on the subject of this Bill: "Those Natives were afraid that their rights over

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<sup>199</sup> 31 July 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.14, p.186

<sup>200</sup> 1 Aug 1873, *Wellington Independent*, p.2

<sup>201</sup> 8 Aug 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.14, p.352

<sup>202</sup> 8 Aug 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.14, p.614

<sup>203</sup> 8 Aug 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.14, p.614

<sup>204</sup> 8 Aug 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.14, p.614

those streams would be taken by the Queen or by the Government.” Parata put forward the case of the Maori owners noting:

There were many streams still in the hands of Maoris, and if there was no restriction placed in the Bill upon the construction of dams in the small creeks, very great damage would no doubt result to the property and houses of the people.<sup>205</sup>

Parata indicated that he intended to propose an amendment to prevent the construction of dams in those streams and creeks where Maori sought protection. Therefore he wanted to see the Bill postponed until the next session adding “there were objections to it from all parts of the country.”<sup>206</sup> Despite these comments, after considerable debate, the House went into Committee on the Bill and it subsequently was read a third time.<sup>207</sup>

Further insight on Parata’s experience at this time is recorded on 22 September 1873 when the Maori Representation Bill was brought before the House and the matter of bringing in one further Maori seat was debated. Parata supported the Bill, explaining the position that Maori members found themselves in:

He wished to see the proposal carried into effect, because it would do away with many complaints which were urged by those natives who objected to being represented by one man, who they said did not perhaps carry out their views. The question was often asked by Maoris, “Who was it elected those Maoris who have seats in the House?” and they were justified in asking that question, because there were practically no representative for the Tauranga, Hauraki, and Waikato districts.<sup>208</sup>

Parata considered that it was only the fact that the Native Minister visited Maori and explained what had taken place in the House that “kept those people right”.

On 3 October 1873, the third session of the Fifth Parliament was prorogued.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> 10 Sept 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.15, p.1007

<sup>206</sup> 10 Sept 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.15, p.1007

<sup>207</sup> 10 Sept 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.15, p.1011

<sup>208</sup> 22 Sept 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.15, p.1304

<sup>209</sup> 3 Oct 1873, *NZPD*, Vol.15, p.1556

## 1874

The 1873 session of Parliament had seen Parata put forward contrary positions on several issues to those he had previously expressed in the House. It also, however, saw that on matters where there was strong Maori complaint, Parata would represent the feeling of his constituents. Overall, however, there was much less comment in the House from Parata. Over the following year, when the House was not in session, Parata did not attract the attention of the media. There is little known, therefore, of his activities right up until the next Parliament sat. Even then, Parata was comparatively silent again. Each time he spoke, however, his position was in support of Government proposals. The fourth session of the Fifth Parliament opened on the 3 July 1874. It was to be a very short session which was ended by the resignation of the Governor.

On 25 August 1874, the Native Lands Bill was debated in the House of Representatives. Sheehan told the House he would not like the Bill to pass into Committee without expressing his opinion. He noted that the Judges to whom he had spoke felt that the Bill could not be made to work. The Bill had “largely increased the cost of administration, the expenses of the Natives for survey and investigation, and had created such an unnecessary amount of work...” Sheehan pointed to the “large number of petitions that had come before the House from various parts of the colony” Nevertheless, for the moment, he would not oppose the Bill.<sup>210</sup>

Takamoana spoke against the Native Land Act indicating it was “a matter of regret” to him that it had come forward as Maori wanted to “do away with the Native Lands Act altogether”. He explained to the House that this was not his personal objection: “the Maori members sat in Parliament to receive the grievance of other Maoris, and to submit them to the House”.<sup>211</sup>

Parata told the House that he did not consider that enough time had passed to judge the merit of the existing Native Lands Act:

If the House had any objections to that Act, let them go back to the law of 1862. The members who objected to this Bill were not those who were living

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<sup>210</sup> 25 Aug 1874, *NZPD*, Vol.16, p.937

<sup>211</sup> 25 Aug 1874, *NZPD*, Vol.16, p.938

upon land which had been properly acquired, but were those how were living upon lands belonging to the Natives.<sup>212</sup>

Patara remarked that; “If those who objected to the Bill had any better mode of procedure to propose, he would be glad to consider it.” He referred to the petitions that had been presented to the House as follows:

The petitions which had been presented to the House were not against the Act itself, but were merely to suggest certain amendments in the Bill which was now before the House. The Maoris had not expressed a general objection to the Act, but had only objected to parts of it.<sup>213</sup>

McLean appeared to support the view of Parata regarding there having been an insufficient length of time in which to consider the merit of the new Native Lands Act. Like Parata, he indicated that the petitions were generally against certain portions of the Act rather than the Act as a whole. The Bill was read a second time, considered in Committee, reported without amendment, and read a third time.<sup>214</sup>

On 31 August 1874, the fourth session of the fifth Parliament was prorogued.<sup>215</sup> By this time it had been reported that Governor James Fergusson had resigned and was to be succeeded by Sir George Augustus Constantine Phipps, 2nd Marquess of Normanby, who had previously been the Governor of Queensland.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> 25 Aug 1874, *NZPD*, Vol.16, p.939

<sup>213</sup> 25 Aug 1874, *NZPD*, Vol.16, p.939

<sup>214</sup> 25 Aug 1874, *NZPD*, Vol.16, p.939

<sup>215</sup> 31 Aug 1874, *NZPD*, Vol.16, p.1024

<sup>216</sup> 24 Aug, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2; see also Governor-General Website: <https://gg.govt.nz/biographies/marquess-normanby-gcb-gcmg-pc>

## 1875

The year 1875 was an election year. Comments published about Parata from the beginning of the year, before Parliament sat, reveal how various sectors saw his role in the Executive and in Parliament in general. The comments not only apply to Wi Parata but relate to the disadvantages faced by any Maori member of Parliament at this time.

Although much evidence in this report records how Pakeha media had formed a dim view of Parata for the role he played in the fall of the Stafford Ministry, over time support for Parata among some Pakeha commentators began to rise as it was expected that he was furthering Government (and therefore Pakeha) settlement objectives in relation to Maori land and other policy. For example, one view expressed at this time was that Parata was “bringing his influence to bear on the side of colonisation” by helping the Government acquire Maori land although it was noted that this was being done “without prejudice to the interests of his race.”<sup>217</sup> A specific example of the way in which Parata had helped the Government acquire land is not given. Another local Otaki Pakeha commentator supported Wi Parata because it was felt that, with his influence, he could assist in the acquiring land locally thereby “furthering the cause of colonisation.” For this settler, the extinguishment of native title equated with peace and progress on the Otaki coast. Therefore, he was happy to forgive Parata’s perceived shortcomings in a Pakeha-dominated Parliament:

....WiParata, from his ignorance of the English language, and from other defects in his education, is to a certain extent unfitted for his position wherein a knowledge of and acquaintance with Parliamentary routine is concerned, and is thus not enabled to take an active part in discussions affecting the interests of his constituencies....<sup>218</sup>

In an election year, however, it was not the view of Pakeha commentators that would count. Nevertheless, there was evidence that Maori opinion towards Parata, and his colleagues, was less than supportive. For example, by the end of March 1875, *Wananga*, the newspaper of the Hawkes Bay Repudiation Movement, published an article critical of most of the current Maori Members and especially critical of the two Executive Council Members.

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<sup>217</sup> 30 Dec 1874, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>218</sup> 3 Feb 1875, *Wananga*, p.2



If we examine the action of our Maori representatives in the Parliament now in existence we cannot but be struck with the singular position they occupy and the lack of influence they possess Two Members, as a rule, vote with the Government, two on the other side in almost every instance. Wi Parata and Wi Katene are Maori Ministers, hence their votes are certain. Karaitiana and Taiaroa represent the Opposition. On subjects with which they are not acquainted they vote as they are directed and on matters connected with the Native race Katene and Parata follow with an obedience equally profound. It is well known that of the four Members with the exception of Taiaroa not one can follow a debate through the House, or even form an opinion as to its nature. Hence their chief disability in influencing legislation. And when matters affecting the Native race come forward they are almost laboring under an equal disadvantage, as the Bills for the last two sessions affecting their interests have not been printed in the Maori language and circulated among the Maori people....<sup>219</sup>

The fifth session of the Fifth Parliament opened on 20 July 1875. By this time Sir George Augustus Constantine Phipps was the Governor. A further development since the last session of Parliament was that Julius Vogel had travelled to England and negotiated a substantial loan under the Immigration and Public Works Act. While in England, Vogel suffered from ill-health preventing his return in time for the opening of Parliament. Under these circumstances, Vogel and his Ministers tendered their resignations to the Governor who commissioned Daniel Pollen to re-form a Government. Daniel Pollen had been a part of the Executive Council since 1873, holding the role of Colonial Secretary. Pollen's Ministry was to last until February 1876 when it collapsed and Vogel again formed a Government. Donald McLean continued to hold the role of Native Minister under Pollen's ministry.<sup>220</sup>

On 27 August 1875, Donald McLean brought forward the Confiscated Lands Administration Bill, which he indicated would place the confiscated lands under the ordinary administration as the wastelands in the provinces in which they were situated.<sup>221</sup> On this significant issue, Parata broke government ranks stating that he disapproved of the confiscated lands being placed under the authority of the provinces because he considered that in the past Superintendents of provinces had not been in communication with Maori. It was to the General Government that Maori had communicated their desire for the return of the lands. It also appears that this important matter had not been put before either himself or Katene.

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<sup>219</sup> 26 Mar 1875, *Wananga*, p.1

<sup>220</sup> 20 July 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.17, p.2; see also McLintock, A.H. [Editor], 'Pollen, Daniel', *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, originally published in 1966, *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*  
URL: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/1966/pollen-daniel> (accessed 07 Feb 2019)

<sup>221</sup> 27 Aug 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.17, p.656

The House knew very well that the Natives had been continually urging the Government to restore to them the confiscated lands. As he and his colleague had been appointed members of the Government, this was a matter which should have been fully gone on with among them.<sup>222</sup>

Parata clarified that he was not standing in opposition to the Government, “but merely on this word alone”

The House knew that the confiscation of the lands was a subject which caused great trouble among the Maoris, and the Natives had been urging the Native Minister to return those lands. He thought the Native Minister ought to keep those lands under his own jurisdiction, and not hand them over to the provinces, lest there should be trouble thereafter.<sup>223</sup>

On 2 September 1875, there was an extensive debate in the House regarding the ‘Abolition of Provinces Bill’. The matter long had been discussed and was occurring within a context where Central Government had already absorbed many provincial government functions.<sup>224</sup> During this wide-ranging debate, Parata explained that his support for the Bill was due to way that the Wellington Superintendent had neglected the Maori areas of his province. For example, he referred to the lack of roading development in the Rangitikei district.<sup>225</sup> He emphasised that he was not merely supporting the Bill on account of his “position on these benches” but that it was because “I have seen a laxity of duty on the part of the Superintendent”. In addition, Parata contended that the Superintendent’s actions had hampered the resolution of matters related to the Rangitikei block.<sup>226</sup>

The Abolition of Provinces Act was again debated in the House on 16 September. During this round of debate, Takamoana blamed the Government in relation to several aspects of their policies regarding the leasing and purchase of Native land and the resulting negative impacts. He also spoke of the Government’s lack of attention regarding the numerous petitions that had been

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<sup>222</sup> 27 Aug 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.17, p.658

<sup>223</sup> 27 Aug 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.17, p.658

<sup>224</sup> McLintock A.H. (editor), ‘Provincial Divergencies’, from *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, 1966, in *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*  
URL: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/1966/provinces-and-provincial-districts/page-4> (accessed 07 Feb 2019)

<sup>225</sup> 2 Sept 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.18, p.94

<sup>226</sup> 2 Sept 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.18, p.94

presented to them by Maori.<sup>227</sup>In response, Parata presented a wide ranging defence of the Government, its land purchase programme and the Land Court.<sup>228</sup>

Aside from his role of supporting Government policy, Parata expressed his own views on matters over which he held a personal perspective. For example, on 8 September 1875, John Williams, the Bay of Islands representative, brought forward a motion in relation to ‘Soldiers’ Graves’. He described how there were graves of various naval and military officers in a variety of places throughout the Bay of Islands which were neglected. Williams proposed to the House that funding be provided to maintain these graves.<sup>229</sup> Parata supported the motion but explained he would like to see it extended so as to include Maori graves, whether they fought on one side or the other..<sup>230</sup>

In addition, the matter of Maori representation again provided Parata to explain his position within politics. On 7 October 1875, Hori Kerei Taiaroa, the Southern Maori representative, moved the second reading of the Maori Representation Bill stating that he had brought it forward with a view of having the Maori representation in the House increased by three members. He referred to a great number of petitions that had been presented to the House by North Island Maori which had wanted an increase of up to twenty-six members.<sup>231</sup>Parata entirely supported this Bill:

The district which he was elected for to represent commenced at the Thames, went round by the Manukau and Taranaki and came right down here. He was the only Maori member representing those districts in the House.<sup>232</sup>

He commented that he had not always received good wishes from people while in the House and that he had often heard European members from the Thames and other districts within his electorate speaking about Maori matters of which they had no knowledge. He pointed out that his electorate “...contained that district which had caused much trouble against the laws of the land, and about which trouble had arisen.” He explained thathe spoke as a private member and considered that the three additional Maori members asked for should be granted:

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<sup>227</sup> 8 Sept 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.18, p.390

<sup>228</sup> 8 Sept 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.18, p.390

<sup>229</sup> 8 Sept 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.18, p.220

<sup>230</sup> 8 Sept 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.18, pp.221-222

<sup>231</sup> 7 Oct 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.19, p.319

<sup>232</sup> 7 Oct 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.19, p.321

... one member for the Waikato to assist himself; one at Hauraki to assist Mr. Takamoana; and one at the Bay of Islands, to assist Mr. Katene; and one, along with Mr. Taiaora for the Middle Island.<sup>233</sup>

Later in the debate, Parata responded to William Swanson, the representative for Newton, who had claimed that the Maori members only supported the Government because promises were made that they should be made Ministers. He referred to his past opposition to Stafford and to the Native Minister and indicated that he had never been told that if he opposed Stafford he would be made a Minister. Instead, Parata claimed that it was Governor Bowen who had made the suggestion to him at Manawatu. He then noted how he personally felt about the suggestion:

He was not inclined to be appointed a Minister, but he consented to join the Government when Mr. Waterhouse was made Premier. He was in Auckland when Mr. Waterhouse left the Government; and it was through the good policy of the Native Minister in conciliating the Hauhaus that he remained in the Government.<sup>234</sup>

He spoke about these matters “because he did not wish the House to suppose that he joined on account of any promises made on the occasions referred to”.<sup>235</sup>

The Maori Representation Bill did not pass the second reading with 20 voting against the Bill and 17 (including all the Maori representatives) voting for the Bill.<sup>236</sup>

On 21 October 1875, the fifth and final session of the Fifth Parliament was prorogued.<sup>237</sup> A general election then followed.

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<sup>233</sup> 7 Oct 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.19, p.321

<sup>234</sup> 7 Oct 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.19, p.322

<sup>235</sup> 7 Oct 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.19, p.322

<sup>236</sup> 7 Oct 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.19, p.323

<sup>237</sup> 7 Oct 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.19, p.614

## The 1876 Election

By the end of Parata's term in Parliament, there is evidence of criticism among some Maori over his performance and his appointment to the Executive Council. On 29 December 1875, a "monster meeting" was convened by Ngati Kahungunu at Pakowhai to decide on the Eastern Maori representative for Parliament. During this meeting Paramena Naonao spoke regarding the Maori representatives who had been in Parliament during the last session:

I have not seen anything in Karaitiana's parliamentary life that I would condemn, but Wi Parata, of the West Coast, and Wi Katene of the Ngapuhi, acted like murderers to the Maori constituents, they accepted Government appointments and Government money, and the work for which they had been sent by their people (the Natives of New Zealand), was left undone by them, and not only so, but they joined the Government in acts which are the opposite to that which is good for the Native race...<sup>238</sup>

Parata was also criticised in a letter addressed to him from Paora Torotoro (also of Hawkes Bay) and printed in the *Wananga* on 8 January 1876. Torotoro referred to a statement by Parata that "the Natives have servilely begged for monies for their lands which were sold by them". Torotoro argued that this was not true and contended that it was the Europeans who "begged from the Natives the Crown grants for their lands once, twice, and again, as children beg from their parents".<sup>239</sup>

In the 1876 general election, Wi Parata's seat in the Western Maori Electoral District was contested by Te Keepa Rangihwinui and Hoane Nahe.<sup>240</sup> On 12 January 1876, the *NZ Herald* predicted that Nahe would associate himself with those who were in "determined opposition to the present Government" and therefore would have the sympathy of the majority of Auckland. It was considered that he would secure the Thames vote and that canvassing was taking part on his behalf in the Waikato.<sup>241</sup> Another article on polling at Shortland recorded that Parata had "...rendered himself unpopular, owing to his supporting the Government in the confiscation of

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<sup>238</sup> 8 Jan 1876, *Wananga*, p.9

<sup>239</sup> 8 Jan 1876, *Wananga*, p.11

<sup>240</sup> 4 Jan 1876, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>241</sup> 12 Jan 1876, *NZ Herald*, p.3

the Manawatu block.<sup>242</sup> In Waiuku as well, Maori were reported as saying that: “Wi Parata has been in the House for the last five years and done no good.”<sup>243</sup>

Ultimately, Wi Parata lost the Western Maori District seat in the general election as did Wi Katene who had also held a seat in Cabinet. The *Evening Post* reported that:

Wi Parata appears to have altogether lost the confidence and goodwill of his late constituents. He was elected on the promise “that he would get them back the confiscated lands”, but the Ministry got hold of him, made him one of their colleagues, granted him a salary, and transformed him into a very obsequious personage, ready to do their bidding, and vote as he was told. Thus he disappointed and disgusted his admirers, who have therefore rejected him, and elected Hoani Nahe, a chief resident at the Thames in his stead.<sup>244</sup>

The *Timaru Herald* noted that Parata and Katene, as members of the Executive Council, had lost their seats while Karaitiana Takamoana, “one of the bitterest opponents of Sir Donald McLean” had been re-elected with “flying colours”. This article presented the view that McLean had only made the appointments to the Executive Council in order to get the votes of the two Members. It was maintained that “Parata fairly sold his vote for the seat in the Ministry, turning traitor to Mr Stafford’s party on the very night of the division”. The article was highly critical of Parata’s performance in Parliament stating: “Parata was utterly unfit to be in Parliament or anywhere else where principle or intelligence is a qualification.” The reporter was not surprised that Katene and Parata, in standing for re-election, had not found their position as Ministers to be an advantage. It was suggested that the Government and the Native Minister had found their presence on the Executive Council “an intolerable nuisance” at times and it was considered probable that the whole immense influence of the Native Office was used against them at the instigation of McLean. McLean and the other Ministers were said to be pleased by their defeat. This article opposed Maori representation altogether, giving the view that it lowered the standard of the Chamber.<sup>245</sup>

The *Wananga* also commented on the fate of Wi Parata and Wi Katene in losing their seats, suggesting that they “richly deserved it”. The article continued:

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<sup>242</sup> 17 Jan 1876, *Thames Advertiser*, p.3

<sup>243</sup> 18 Jan 1876, *NZ Herald*, p.3

<sup>244</sup> 25 Jan 1876, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>245</sup> 11 Feb 1876, *Timaru Herald*, p.7

We well remember their first two years in Parliament. They outshone the other Native members and friends of the Maori people in the House in the extent of their demands for justice to the Maoris. No sooner had they joined the Government, and tasted the corrupting sweetness of Government money, than their policy was entirely changed...they became approvers of the worst measures of the Government affecting the Maoris – they became persecutors of their people...<sup>246</sup>

Waikato Maori made their views regarding Parata known to the *Wairarapa Standard*. They also referred to Parata as being “once powerful to forward those things by which these islands might obtain good”. However, they considered that “...the Government by money, killed the power in him to act, and he became dumb, and did not work for those who sent him to Parliament.”<sup>247</sup>

Not all voices criticised Parata and Katene. Eparaima Henare wrote to the *Waka Maori* defending some of the criticisms that had been made in relation to Parata and Katene. He pointed out that both Karaitiana Takamoana and Taiaroa (the other Maori representatives) had urged that Maori should be admitted to seats on the Ministerial benches and it was in accordance with that request that the Government had appointed Katene and Parata whose characters as a consequence were “...being aspersed and calumniated.” Henare was critical of those who had made attacks upon Parata and Katene in the *Wananga* as he considered that these critics had not put forward any definite wrong-doing. He pointed out that the greatest complaints arose from the fact of their support for the abolition of the Provinces (which Henare supported) and of having received a yearly payment of money from the Government. He argued that the Government did not of their own accord take them into the Executive Council, that this occurred via an act of Parliament.<sup>248</sup>

Nevertheless, some Maori continued to be critical of Parata’s time in Parliament well after the tenure had ended. In March 1877, at a repudiationist meeting at Omahu, Renata Kawepo spoke of Parata as having been bought with money by the party for whom he acted in Parliament.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> 21 Feb 1876, *Wananga*, p.3

<sup>247</sup> 16 March 1876, *Wairarapa Standard*, p.2

<sup>248</sup> 21 March 1876, *Waka Maori*, p.7

<sup>249</sup> 31 March 1877, *Wananga*, p.8

In the wake of the stinging attacks referred to above, Parata later used the *Waka Maori* publication to air his criticisms of the *Wananga*. On 3 September 1878, Wi Parata wrote offering his support for the *Waka Maori* publication and described the *Wananga* as a publication which “slanders men who are living inoffensively”. Parata maintained he would have “none of it”.<sup>250</sup> The following month Katene also wrote to the *Waka Maori* and he was also critical of the “evil” work done by the *Wananga*. He noted that he had been ridiculed by the *Wananga* which had said that the mouths of he and Parata “were stopped with money”.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> 4 Sept 1878, *Waka Maori*, p.1

<sup>251</sup> 16 Oct 1878, *Waka Maori*, p.13



## PARATA AS ACTIVIST

As indicated above, Wi Parata's departure from Parliament occurred within a context of suspicion and dissatisfaction being expressed over the experiment of bringing elected members from Maori seats into Cabinet. Although Parata continually protested that he had not been 'bought off', from his publicly recorded actions he certainly appeared to become less of a dynamic force in Parliament over 1874 and 1875. Nevertheless, Parata's commitment to being involved with and fighting for Maori issues would be shown over his post-Parliamentary life. His exit from Parliament was merely the beginning of a thirty-year period where Parata would be closely involved in a range of key issues confronting Maori through to the turn of the century.

That Parata's exit from Parliament did not equate with an end to his involvement in politics is shown in August 1876 when Wi Parata was part of deputation of Maori who met with Native Minister Donald McLean regarding the Native Land Sales Bill that was before Parliament at that time. This Bill provided a mechanism to allow any Maori who wished to sell or lease their land, to use the local Crown Lands Board to act as their agent and deal with the land as the Board would with any Crown land. The August deputation, headed by Te Keepa Rangihwinui, told McLean that they did not want this Bill passed into law as they could see no possible benefit likely to accrue to Maori from the Bill. Wi Parata also stated that it was "not a good Bill" and asked McLean not to let the Bill be introduced to Parliament. McLean told them that he needed to consult with his colleagues before advising the deputation of his final decision. (The 1876 Bill eventually was passed and became an Act in 1880.)<sup>252</sup>

Over the next three decades, Parata would become involved in several issues of national significance associated with educational reserve land, the ongoing saga of Taranaki issues and the 1890s Maori parliamentary movement. These subjects, and others, are examined in this final Section of the report.

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<sup>252</sup> 1 September 1876, *Lyttelton Times*, p.2

## **Educational Reserve Land at Porirua**

Wi Parata's involvement as claimant in litigation over educational trust land at Whitireia is a well-known story and one that is famous for the Court's finding that the Treaty of Waitangi, on which the pleadings has been partly based, was a nullity in law. The details of the case and the implications of the result are too complex to be gone into in a report of this nature. Using the limited sources noted in the Introduction, however, a snapshot of this issue, its context and where it sits in Parata's public life will be briefly reviewed.

The issue of the educational trust land was an important one for Parata. Land, given by Maori (usually in the 1850s) to churches for the purposes of building and running schools were a significant local feature in Motueka, Porirua, Otaki and Masterton. In these cases, either schools had not been built or they had closed over time with the land and any capital assets remaining with the Church which usually held the originally gifted land under Crown Grant. The expectation of those who had gifted the land for a specific purpose was that either the land should be used for the purpose gifted or it should be returned. That this was an issue for Parata, who had connections both in Porirua and Otaki, was reflected when he was still a parliamentarian and raised the matter during a debate on the Education Bill in 1871.

This bill was taking land from them [Maori] for educational purposes, while there were reserves which had been given to the Europeans by the natives for educational purposes [and were] only occupied by cattle and sheep. Why did they not utilise those lands before taking others?<sup>253</sup>

Furthermore, during a debate on Maori representation in Parliament in 1872, Parata again demanded that the reserves formerly set aside to the various missionary bodies should now be handed over to education boards. According to Parata, those he was representing needed the issue of the Maori lands being "given up wrongly" to be resolved before any schools for Maori could be established:

The Government ought to look into the question affecting the lands which were given up by the Maoris wrongly, because it was a grievance to the Natives. If these places were returned to the Maoris, schools would be readily agreed to. The Maoris were willing enough to have schools erected in their districts, but

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<sup>253</sup>9 Sep 1871, *Wellington Independent*, p.3

what kept them back was the lands which were set apart for schools formerly.<sup>254</sup>

Although this report has suggested that Parata taking up a role in government meant a more conciliatory position on a number of issues, he maintained his stance on educational trust lands as his evident from his words in the House in 1875.

With reference to the matter of education, referred to in the Governor's speech at the beginning of Parliament, it is only now that education had been established by which the children of New Zealand are beginning to learn something. The waste lands were formerly given up to the Governor to administer by him and his Ministers alone for educational purposes, but no good result was gained. If a school had been established in my district, I dare say I should be able to come into this House and talk to you in your own language.<sup>255</sup>

Once out of Parliament, during 1876, a number of Maori under the leadership of Wi Parata petitioned Parliament for the restoration of the educational trust land at Porirua. During August 1876, the Native Affairs Committee reported on this petition as follows:

That the educational reserve referred to in the petition is a block of land situated in Porirua, in the province of Wellington, containing 500 acres, which in the year 1850 was conveyed by natives of the Ngatitua and Ngatiraukawa tribes to the Bishop of New Zealand, in trust for religious and educational purposes.<sup>256</sup>

The Native Affairs Committee found that:

There can be no doubt, from the terms of the grant, that the erection and maintenance of a school at Porirua formed the principal considerations of the trust; and it seems equally clear, from evidence taken by the committee, that a school has not been erected there. Moreover it does not appear that there is any intention on the part of the trustee to fulfil this condition of the trust.<sup>257</sup>

The Committee was not prepared to say whether by that time it was "either wise or expedient" to erect a school on the land for the purposes indicated in the grant. They further commented that they were "even less disposed" to recommend that legislative action be taken to convey the land

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<sup>254</sup> 13 Aug 1872, *NZPD*, Vol.12, p.451

<sup>255</sup> 2 Sept 1875, *NZPD*, Vol.18, pp.94-95

<sup>256</sup> 14 Aug 1876, *NZ Times*, p.2

<sup>257</sup> 14 Aug 1876, *NZ Times*, p.2

in question back to the petitioners. In conclusion, the Committee gave the opinion, "...that if many educational reserves are similarly situated to this one, the present position of the religious, charitable, and education trusts of the colony requires the most serious and careful consideration in the House."<sup>258</sup>

On 28 September 1876, the petition by Wi Parata and others was the subject of a motion by Hori Kerei Taiaroa (Southern Maori representative):

That the report of the Native Affairs Committee, on the petition of Wi Parata and others, relative to lands at Porirua conveyed by natives of the Ngatitōa tribe in trust as a school reserve, be referred to the Government, with an expression of opinion by this House that the Government should take steps to enforce the performance of the trusts for which such land was given by native owners, or compel the trustees to restore the land to the original owners.<sup>259</sup>

In response, Donald McLean, the Native Minister commented that although the request was fair and reasonable, nearly all the Maori living at Porirua had left the place or died off and this was why no school had been erected.<sup>260</sup> Sir George Grey, the Governor involved during the gifting of the land, considered that equity demanded that the land should revert to the original owners.<sup>261</sup>

Subsequently, the matter was twice before the House of Representatives and in each case a select committee decided against Wi Parata. In June 1877, Parata decided to take the matter to the Supreme Court. Parata cited the fact that he could not read or speak English as proof of the fact that no provision was ever made for the education of the children on the land given for that purpose at Porirua. Parata, as the lineal descendant of the chiefs of the tribe, asked that the land should be re-conveyed to him in trust on the grounds that the conditions of the original trust had not been carried out. It was reported that the Bishop of Wellington defended the Church on England saying that there was no specific condition associated with the timeframe as to the erection of a school on the land. On 27 June 1876, it was reported that Mr. Barton, on behalf of Parata, was applying to the Judges to grant an injunction restraining the Bishop from receiving the rents and profits of the land, and to make an order for the payments of such profits to other trustees until the question at issue had been decided.<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> 14 Aug 1876, *NZ Times*, p.2

<sup>259</sup> 29 Sept 1876, *NZ Times*, p.2

<sup>260</sup> 7 Nov 1876, *Waka Maori*, p.7

<sup>261</sup> 29 Sept 1876, *NZ Times*, p.2

<sup>262</sup> 27 June 1877, *NZ Times*, p.2

Parata's case against the Bishop of Wellington was heard before the Supreme Court on 13 July 1877. Barton presented the case for Parata, noting that the Church had been issued a grant from the Crown by Sir George Grey. It was pointed out that as the school had never been erected, Parata as the plaintiff contended that the land should revert to him, as the chief of the tribe and to the thirty or forty remaining members of the tribe who were scattered throughout the Wellington Province. Barton stated that the monies received out of the land and distributed amongst a variety of charities, were not being expended as originally intended: "At the conclusion of Barton's argument in support of the motion for injunction and also on the demurrer, the Court without calling on the other side to reply reserved judgement."<sup>263</sup>

Three months later, on 17 October 1877, the Court delivered a judgement in the case. It was reported in the newspapers that the Chief Justice read a very elaborate judgment discussing the entire state of the law respecting Maori lands held in trust for charitable purposes. Ultimately, it was decided that: "... the motion for injunction and receiver made by Wi Parata should be dismissed with costs..."<sup>264</sup>

Following the judgement, Barton asked for leave to appeal directly to the Privy Council without first appealing to the Appeal Court of New Zealand. After some discussion, Barton showed that they had the right to do this.<sup>265</sup> Parata was unsuccessful in his case before the Privy Council.<sup>266</sup> Despite this defeat, as will be shown later in this report, the matter of the status of educational trust land, would remain an ongoing issue for Parata.

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<sup>263</sup> 13 July 1877, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>264</sup> 17 Oct 1877, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>265</sup> 17 Oct 1877, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>266</sup> 11 April 1903, *Oamaru Mail*, p.4

## **Parata and Taranaki Issues 1876-1890**

Wi Parata's parliamentary record reveals that land confiscation and dealing with post-warfare rehabilitation issues both in Taranaki and Waikato had been a major issue he had dealt with from his first entry into the House of Representatives. As it turned out, however, it would be Parata's years after his parliamentary career where he became more deeply involved in these matters. Considering these later close connections, rumours were later reported that Wi Parata's ties with Parihaka dated back to his days in Parliament with one newspaper later reporting that Parata "...sat in the House, drew his cheque, and turned it immediately into powder and shot, which was packed off to Parihaka — for pigeon shooting, no doubt."<sup>267</sup> Given the way in which Parata was received by Te Whiti in 1873, and considering the evidence presented in this subsection of the report, Parata's significant relationship with Parihaka was one that evolved over time.

### **Hui at Waitara: June 1878**

On 29 June 1878, a significant hui was held between Rewi Maniapoto and the Premier Sir George Grey the result of which was a finalised peace settlement between the two. Parata was in attendance with a number of chiefs from the western coast including Matene Te Whiwhi and Mete Kingi. On 27 June, the first day of the meeting, introductory comments were made by all. Grey placed emphasis on the way in which New Zealand had changed since the wars and that now was the time for all to act in a united manner in the interests of the country. To illustrate this, Grey had noted that many chiefs in New Zealand now had family members who had married Pakeha and therefore had Pakeha as relations. He also noted how many of the Pakeha now in Parliament were New Zealand-born. Rewi Maniapoto agreed there should be unity using the metaphor that a tree should be planted at Waitara the offshoots of which would flourish around the country. After these two speakers, other chiefs gave brief addresses.<sup>268</sup> The speech of Wi Parata was reported as follows:

I am a half-caste, but I cannot leave my people. I stand by the race to which my mother belongs. I rise to reply to what Rewi has said. I agree with what Rewi

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<sup>267</sup>26 Mar 1885, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>268</sup>28 June 1878, *New Zealand Times*, p.2

has said, that we should come to Waitara. where the trouble arose. The misfortune did not end at Waitara, and the Europeans and Natives both got tired of fighting. If the cause of the evil had been seen at the starting there would have been no occasion now to bring Sir G. Grey and Rewi face and face. I approve of what Sir Geo. Grey and Rewi have said, that we should plant a tree here today, from which shoots might be carried throughout the Island. We, the people of our end of the Island, where no troubles exist, are anxious about the future. We ask, is there to be peace, or will there again be trouble in the land? To-morrow when you meet, if your talk is clear, we shall not interfere. We shall listen and approve. It is because of the anxiety of mind under which we, the people who have come from distant places, have been suffering that we have come here to you, and to assist in the settlement between yourself and Sir Geo. Grey. That is all I have to say at the present time.<sup>269</sup>

Other newspaper accounts carried shortened excerpts from Parata's speech each with slight variations of tone and detail. As in the following example, on occasion his message was quite distorted:

I will not divide, neither to my father nor my mother. I will have nothing to do with this meeting. I will listen to you all, and I will also look on. We have people in Parliament to represent us.<sup>270</sup>

These developments resulted in Parata feeling the need to put the record straight. On 1 August 1878 he wrote a long letter to the *New Zealand Mail* which was published in full nine days later. Parata began by noting that from Rewi's perspective, the return of Waitara was an important part of the peace although Grey somewhat fudged the matter.

Listen to me my relatives from every part of New Zealand both Maori and English. I who am writing this letter was present at the meeting of Rewi and Grey. What was said at this meeting will be brought under your notice, you can then judge for yourselves whether it was right or wrong.

The meeting was held because Rewi asked to have Waitara given back ; but I will commence with what they said.

Rewi asked Sir George Grey for Waitara to be given back to him on the 22nd day of June. The answer of Grey to the request of Rewi to give him back Waitara was "You and I can look after Waitara and the people." Rewi answered him "Yes, we have taken away our hands from each others heads." This was said by Rewi to the Government on account of the peace.<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>269</sup>28 June 1878, *Otago Daily Times*, p.2

<sup>270</sup>28 June 1878, *Timaru Herald*, p.3

<sup>271</sup>10 Aug 1878, *New Zealand Mail*, p.22

Parata also wanted to inform the public that there was a new threat to peace arising from Government actions of surveying land on the Waimate plains. Parata wanted to make it clear that peace had only come about through the words and actions of the Parihaka leaders and that it was they who maintained the peace.

I have heard that the Government are going to survey Waimate block in the Ngatiruanui district, and inside the land cut off by the Government of McLean for Titokowaru in the year 1872. This year 1878 Waimate, which was given to Titokowaru and his people, is ordered to be surveyed. Friends listen; everyone who sees this letter. If it had not been for the words of Te Whiti and Kotuhu, in making a law to guide the doings of the people of Taranaki and Ngatiruanui, things would have gone bad among people of this island, and blood would have continued to have been spilled to the present day, and it was through the good words of Te Whiti and Kotuhu that it was stopped, viz., the spilling of blood all over the island.

It was through these men that the sun came from under the earth, and if it had not been for them there would have been no stop to the spilling of that thing - blood. I who am writing this to the newspaper am from Ngatiawa. I am one who has influence over these people - over Ngatiawa, Taranaki, and Ngatiruanui. Friends, it is not as if I were speaking romance to you.

No. I am speaking the words of truth, as you will know in the days that are coming. You will hear and say, "Yes, the words of the man who published this are true."

Finally, Parata wanted to make it clear that the apparent accord reached between Grey and Rewi did not bind Taranaki in any way and that a peace settlement had not yet been achieved.

It is not as if I went there (Waitara) for pleasure. No; I went there to listen to what was good and what was bad. Friends, the people who are living at the end of Ao-te-Aroa. Listen to my word. According to my knowledge this peace is not for the people who are living at Waitara, Taranaki, or Ngatiruanui, but for the Ngatimaniapoto alone, this peace of Rewi and Grey. Do not think for a moment that the people of Waitara or Taranaki had anything to do with it.

No. Wiremu Kingi (William King) was not there. He did not attend the meeting at Waitara. Te Whiti was not there, the Taranaki chief; he did not attend the meeting. Titokowaru, the great fighting chief, did not come. Therefore he has nothing to do with the peace. The day the Parliament of New Zealand was opened I saw that it was wrong. I listened and heard nothing good. One thing only did I hear, and that was the peace of Rewi and Grey. It is not a general peace, but only between them and the Ngatimainapoto.



## **Parihaka: Ploughmen & Royal Commission**

As indicated in Parata's August 1878 letter, his connections with, and support of the Parihaka community had greatly increased since his visit there as a member of government in February 1873. Over the next decades this connections would increase and intensify.

In March 1879, it was report Parata travelled to a hui at Parihaki accompanied by several member of his family.<sup>272</sup> At the 17 March hui, Parata was particularly pointed out by newspaper coverage as one of the notable attendees at the hui although he was not recorded as speaking.<sup>273</sup> In fact, according to one account, the meeting, attended by 1500 persons, was something of a non-event as it appears that Te Whiti had expected the attendance of the Native Minister. When this did not eventuate, Te Whiti merely noted that nothing really could proceed.<sup>274</sup>

In May 1879, the Government moved to occupy fertile land in the Waimate Plains that they considered belonged to the Crown following the confiscations of the 1860s. In response, Te Whiti and Tohu developed a strategy of non-violent resistance that involved ploughmen from Parihaka fanning out across Taranaki to assert Maori continued ownership of the land. The Government reacted with laws targeting the Parihaka ploughmen and ultimately imprisoned several hundred ploughmen without trial.<sup>275</sup>

On 3 July 1879, it was reported from Waitara that among the 35 'ploughmen' arrested on that date was Wi Parata's son Winara.<sup>276</sup> By the next day it was reported that Titokawaru would soon commence ploughing with 150 followers all of which, it was assumed, would be arrested.<sup>277</sup> News of the arrests, and that Wi Parata's son was amongst those detained, was carried by a number of newspapers. By 4 July comment had been received from Wi Parata with various newspapers carrying varying forms of what Parata said.

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<sup>272</sup>11 Mar 1879, *Press*, p.2

<sup>273</sup>18 Mar 1879, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>274</sup>19 Mar 1879, *New Zealand Times*, p.2

<sup>275</sup> Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 'Invasion of pacifist settlement at Parikaha', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/occupation-pacifist-settlement-at-parihaka>, updated 10 July 2017

<sup>276</sup>3 Jul 1879, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>277</sup>4 Jul 1879, *Auckland Star*, p.2

“When the Hon. Wi Parata was told about his son being arrested with the ploughing party, he said he was not sorry as his son had been doing nothing he need be ashamed of. He was merely making a solemn protest against his countrymen being kept out of what is their just due.” [Southland Times]<sup>278</sup>

“The Hon. Wi Parata, whose son is among the number of those arrested at Urenui for ploughing and who is going to be brought to Wellington with the other prisoners, says he does not feel pouri about the matter as though some evil deed had been committed by him, whereas he has only been entering a protest with others of Ngatiawa.” [Auckland Star]<sup>279</sup>

Parata was reported as adding that the “sole reason” behind those who were ploughing was “they find, year by year, their promised areas are growing unusually less, and soon they will have no place on which to rest their foot.”<sup>280</sup>

Several newspapers noted that Parata intended recommending that the activism of the ploughmen should now cease although, again, the tone of this comment varies between papers.

“The Hon. Wi Parata telegraphed to the leading Maoris on the West Coast saying he thought they had carried the ploughing far enough in asserting their claims, and ought now to stop.” [Thames Star]<sup>281</sup>

“He will wire the people along the coast in reference to further ploughing, thinking their passive protest has gone far enough.” [Auckland Star]<sup>282</sup>

By 26 July, with the prisoners now being situated in Wellington, Wi Parata was reported as refusing to accept bail for his son “as he should take his chance with the others.” Parata was said to be seeking a trial before a justice of the Supreme Court.<sup>283</sup> He appointed Walter Buller as counsel representing the prisoners. Although this was done without the prisoners’ initial consent, they soon confirmed Buller’s appointment to act for them.<sup>284</sup> At a later date, however, it appears that Parata’s son was released on bail and may have been the only prisoner allowed to do so.<sup>285</sup>

In the meantime, in early August, it was announced that the Maori members of both Houses formed a Committee to defend the prisoners and test the legality of the confiscation. Parata was appointed Secretary to the Committee. It was intended that Buller and Travers would be legal

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<sup>278</sup>4 Jul 1879, *Southland Times*, p.2

<sup>279</sup>4 Jul 1879, *Auckland Star*, p.2

<sup>280</sup>5 Jul 1879, *Waikato Times*, p.2

<sup>281</sup>4 Jul 1879, *Thames Star*, p.2

<sup>282</sup>4 Jul 1879, *AucklandStar*, p.2

<sup>283</sup>26 Jul 1879, *Evening Star*, p.2

<sup>284</sup>29 Jul 1879, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>285</sup>9 Aug 1879, *Waka Maori*, p.7

counsel for the case.<sup>286</sup> By the following month the ‘manifesto’ of the Committee was published.<sup>287</sup> It was addressed to “the Maori tribes interested in the lands confiscated by the Government, in consequence of the wars between the Maori and the European peoples” and declared its intention was “to take proceedings for testing the validity of the laws under which the said lands have been confiscated, and are now claimed by the Government, and to enquire into and test the validity of the acts done by the Government under the provisions of those laws...” After setting out the background and details of the confiscation law and practice, a series of questions that the Committee intended to address was listed:

- (1) Whether the Acts of the General Assembly, authorising the confiscation of the Maori lands, are valid Acts or not?
- (2) Whether those Acts, if valid, authorised the Government to confiscate any of the Maori lands by reason of wars which happened after the third day of December, 1863?
- (3) Whether those Acts, if valid, authorise the Government to retain any of the lands within the proclaimed districts, which had not been specifically set apart as sites for settlement before the third day of December, 1867?
- (4) Whether the proceedings of the Government, under those Acts, have been regular and proper, so as to bind the native owners of the lands taken.
- (5) Whether, if those Acts be valid, proper compensation has been made to those who had not been engaged or concerned in the wars ?

While these questions were being tested through legal action, the Committee urged that no acts of violence or force be committed by Taranaki Maori. In return the Committee would seek agreement from the Government to not proceed with any survey or settlement of the disputed lands in question. Apparently 2,000 copies of this manifesto were printed and sent out to iwi and hapu around New Zealand accompanied with subscription lists to raise funds for the intended Court action.<sup>288</sup>

Soon after, Wi Parata was sent by the Committee on a mission to Parihaka. Before attending the monthly hui held at Parihaka, he sent Te Whiti a gift of mutton-birds.<sup>289</sup> Thereafter, Parata set off for Parihaka accompanied by his son Winara and others. The object of his trip, as reported by

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<sup>286</sup>6 Aug 1879, *Oamaru Mail*, p.2

<sup>287</sup>3 Sept 1879, *Patea Mail*, p.2

<sup>288</sup>20 Oct 1891, *Hawkes Bay Herald*, p.3

<sup>289</sup>9 Sept 1879, *Globe*, p.2

one newspaper, was “to persuade Te Whiti to discontinue inciting the Maoris to further acts of rebellion.”<sup>290</sup> Parata’s overtures were reported as being fully rejected by Te Whiti.

Wi Parata's mission has entirely failed, as Te Whiti would not listen to the proposals made by the native delegate. When Wi Parata submitted to Te Whiti the manifesto relative to the confiscated lands being tested in the Courts of Law, Te Whiti replied that he despised the Law Courts. There were only two authorities in the Islands - the Governor and Te Whiti - and they must settle the dispute, not the Law Courts.<sup>291</sup>

The result of Parata having not achieved his objective of gaining support from Te Whiti for the proposed court actions was reported as being welcomed by the settlers as they had envisaged a long and drawn out court process where the case would be tested in the Supreme Court and likely appealed to the Privy Council thereby delaying the survey and sale of lands on the Waimate plains.<sup>292</sup>

In the meantime, the matter of the Maori prisoners remained a topic that was frequently under discussion in the newspapers and in Parliament. On 6 November, Parata wrote a letter which was published in the newspapers responding to questions being asked in Parliament as to the delay in trying the cases of the prisoners.

The desire for the postponement of the trial came from us and the prisoners. We instructed our lawyers to ask for delay. Now for the reason. I have been to Te Whiti, and we have talked face to face before the whole of the people. His word was this: Do not let their trial come first, but mine. The meaning is this: Te Whiti himself is in prison; that is to say, the boundaries of the land have been fixed by the law, and soldiers have been stationed there. Te Whiti's idea is that he should first untwist the knot, and then the way would be clear for the acquittal of the prisoners. I have told everything to Dr. Buller. I have also seen the prisoners. They all consent to the word of their leader. If they are taken before the Supreme Court at once they will refuse to open their mouths. They desire to wait till their proper time arrives. They are not dark about their detention in prison. I therefore say, let the members cease putting questions about the trial. If they want to put questions, let them ask whether the prisoners are getting enough food.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>290</sup>10 Sept 1879, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>291</sup>24 Sept 1879, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>292</sup>29 Sept 1879, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>293</sup>6 Nov 1879, *Evening Post*, p.2

## **Parihaka 1880-81**

In 1879, the Confiscated Lands Inquiry and Maori Prisoners' Trials Act was passed "to manage the incarceration of the ploughmen, to control future disturbances, and to provide for an inquiry into the trouble and Maori allegations of unfulfilled promises." On 20 January 1880, Sir William Fox, Sir Francis Bell, and Hone Tawhai were appointed as commissioners under the Act. Despite the subsequent resignation of Tawhai over the alleged bias of his fellow commissioners, the first West Coast Commission completed their report in the period through to August 1880. The first report, which in fact carried the most substantive findings, was presented on 15 March 1880. The Commission found that promises over the return of confiscated lands had been made, but not fulfilled. Nevertheless, the Commission would only go so far as recommending that reserves be made after the survey and allocation of land for Pakeha settlement be completed.<sup>294</sup> During this period, Wi Parata, not surprisingly was involved in the events that were unfolding.

On 16 January 1880, one newspaper published a rumour that Wi Parata, Wi Tako and the lawyer Buller had sent out a telegram advising Taranaki Maori not to recognise the Commission or appear before it. Instead it was reported that they still believed that the matter of the confiscated land should be heard before independent judges. It was pointed out that one of the commissioners (Fox) was in fact the author of the confiscation policy.<sup>295</sup>

On 19 March, following the completion of another regular hui at Parihaka, the local correspondent for the *New Zealand Times* wrote a scathing piece attacking Wi Parata, demeaning his past efforts and questioning his motives for involvement.

The late member of the Upper House wishes to be thought particularly staunch to Te Whiti, and from the present visit it would appear that he has recovered from the rather severe snubbing which he received at Parihaka in September last, when he went to that place as a representative of the Wellington Maori Committee. Te Whiti told him, with indicative gesture of his hand towards Wi Parata, that it would not be left for people who fancied themselves wise to finish the work, and that he was not scheming for the return of the confiscated land alone. The Maori Committee has sunk into

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<sup>294</sup> Waitangi Tribunal, *The Taranaki Report: Kaupapa Tuatahi*, (Wellington: Legislation Direct, 1996), pp 246 and 235

<sup>295</sup> 16 Jan 1880, *New Zealand Herald*, p.5

oblivion.<sup>296</sup>

The correspondent suggested that Wi Parata was still trying to make himself valuable by providing legal advice to Te Whiti on the illegality of the confiscation but did not believe that Parata was motivated by selflessness.

The fact is that Te Whiti's notions are more thoroughly patriotic than those of Wi Parata, who does not care though his country and his people all went to old Harry, if he could manage to reserve a few thousand acres for himself at Urenui. Te Whiti wishes to make a little kingdom, or rather republic, for himself on the confiscated lands, to which all natives shall be welcome, rich or poor, men of property no more than the landless, and that the Maori shall enjoy a prosperous life in the land, side by side with his European brethren.

Not surprisingly, the correspondent thought very little of Wi Parata's latest proposal for action.

The last move made by Wi Parata and his lawyers is the reported action to be taken against the Governor for damages for illegal imprisonment of the ploughmen. Your correspondent is in a position to affirm that this idea will not meet with the approbation of Te Whiti, and is simply an attempt to extort money under the pretence of sympathy with the prisoners. The difference between Te Whiti and Wi Parata is, that the former is a patriot, and the latter a selfish schemer, who wishes to profit personally by the storm Te Whiti has raised.

Parata continued to attend Parihaka hui. Whenever he passed through to the village Taranaki newspapers recorded the fact. For example, on 14 September 1880, the *Patea Mail* spotted Parata in Hawera on his way north noting of Parata: "He is a thorough believer in Parihaka counsels."<sup>297</sup> In the meantime, Parata's son (who had been reinterned) and some of the other 'ploughmen' prisoners were released from Dunedin reaching New Plymouth on 8 October 1880.<sup>298</sup> Winara then went to live at Parihaka. Later in the month, the media reported that Wi Parata and all his family was moving to Parihaka to join Te Whiti.<sup>299</sup> Clearly, however, Wi Parata continued to journey to and from Parihaka as his movements continued to be reported (for example in February and again in June 1881.)<sup>300</sup> By the second half of 1881, Parata was viewed by the media as being an advisor and spokesperson for Te Whiti.

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<sup>296</sup>20 March 1880, *New Zealand Times*, p.2

<sup>297</sup>14 Sept 1880, *Patea Mail*, p.3

<sup>298</sup>12 Oct 1880, *Patea Mail*, p.3

<sup>299</sup>21 Oct 1880, *Wairarapa Standard*, p.2

<sup>300</sup>19 Feb & 25 June 1881, *Hawera and Normanby Star*

From another native source we learn that Wi Parata, once a member of the House, goes to Parihaka for every half-yearly meeting, and is (if anybody is) Te Whiti's political adviser. Wi Parata denies the interpretation commonly put on Te Whiti's war-like speech, and says Te Whiti meant simply that he will fight as he has fought hitherto by resisting the Government with the words of his mouth; and that will be his mode of war to the end.<sup>301</sup>

The writer of the above article was not convinced, believing that Parata was "putting a certain color on the present trouble to hoodwink the Government until Maori preparations are more complete."

Given such remarks, it is not surprising that Pakeha suspicions in relation to Te Whiti continued to build. The speech by Te Whiti that Parata is recorded above as seeking to explain, was generally viewed as seditious. Therefore, in October 1880, a government proclamation ordered the residents of Parihaka to disperse. From that time, the possibility of Government action and the use of force was expected. On 31 October, Parata was reported as again travelling north to Parihaka to collect his son and bring him home to Waikanae.<sup>302</sup>

### **Attack on Parihaka**

In anticipation that something dramatic was about to occur at Parihaka, reporters were visiting the settlement in the days before the attack. One reporter, who noted seeing Wi Parata at Parihaka on 3 November, recorded the feeling among those waiting in the village as follows: "There is no sign of submission, and no fear of the consequences among the whole of them."<sup>303</sup> The following day, on the eve of the attack, another correspondent visiting Parihaka reported having come across a group studying the Bible which included Te Whiti and Wi Parata.<sup>304</sup>

It was on 5 November 1881 that the troops entered Parihaka and arrested Te Whiti and others. The events of the day, told in detail in several forum, do not need to be repeated in this report.

Following these dramatic events reporters remained on hand visiting Parihaka. On 6 November, one sat in on a hui where the remaining chiefs of the community discussed the next moves.

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<sup>301</sup> 14 Sept 1880, *Patea Mail*, p.3

<sup>302</sup> 31 Oct 1881, *Hawera and Normanby Star*, p.2

<sup>303</sup> 3 Nov 1881, *New Zealand Times*, p.2

<sup>304</sup> 4 Nov 1881, *Auckland Star*, p.2

Parata was among them. Opinions varied on the question of mounting a legal challenge and defence for Te Whiti with some thinking the prophet would oppose such a move. Parata expressed his view.

Wi Parata's advice was that he should employ one [ie a lawyer] in order that the subtleties of British law might be brought to bear on his [Te Whiti's] side of the case. ...Supposing Te Whiti refuses the aid of a lawyer, he said, Government will of course appoint one to defend him, and they will take care that he shall be one who will lean towards their view of the matter.<sup>305</sup>

On 9 November, Parata left Parihaka heading south to Wellington to make arrangements relating to the defence of those arrested.<sup>306</sup> He came away with most of his whanau but could not persuade Winara to join them.<sup>307</sup> The next action reported of Parata was an audience he gained with the Governor to plead the case of Te Whiti and those arrested with him.

Wi Parata pleaded the case of the natives with great earnestness and zeal, urging their peaceful behaviour and intentions, and contending that Government had acted arbitrarily and illegally toward them. He further besought the Governor to advise him what he and the rest of the natives ought to do under the circumstances. Sir Arthur Gordon listened with marked attention, and expressed deep regret at the difficulties which had arisen, but pointed out his own inability to act in the matter, excepting by the advice of his Ministers. Sir Arthur further explained that it would not be proper for him to offer any advice to the natives under present circumstances, but that it was his duty to refer them to his responsible advisers.<sup>308</sup>

The question remained, however, as to whether Te Whiti would accept the services of legal counsel. In April of the following year, he and Tohu were moved to Lyttleton and it appears that expectations had arisen that a trial date was imminent. At this time, Wi Parata visited the prisoners and, it was reported, gained their authority to take measures for their defence.<sup>309</sup>

Before a trial was arranged, another matter arose which is fully described in a petition sent to the House by Wi Parata.

That I hold authority from Te Whiti to act for him, and employ counsel to appear for him in all matters relating to affairs on the West Coast in which he

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<sup>305</sup>8 Nov 1881, *Auckland Star*, p.2

<sup>306</sup>10 Nov 1881, *Otago Daily Times*, p.2

<sup>307</sup>11 Nov 1881, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>308</sup>24 Nov 1881, *New Zealand Herald*, p.5

<sup>309</sup>26 Apr 1882, *Evening Post*, p.2



is concerned; that I think it of importance that Te Whiti should be represented by counsel at the Bar of your House, in regard to a Bill now under the consideration of your House—namely, the West Coast Peace Preservation Bill; that I do not think Te Whiti has any knowledge of the provisions of the said Bill, and his liberty and interests may be prejudiced if he is not allowed to be represented by counsel. May it therefore please your House to allow Te Whiti to appear by counsel on the subject of the Bill.<sup>310</sup>

The petition was reported to have created a “considerable sensation” in Parliament. Although its appearance did lead to the postponement of a scheduled debate on the Bill in question, the first response of the Government was to disbelieve the authority claimed by Parata and to demand proof of that authority before further considering the request of the petition.<sup>311</sup>

Later in the day, newspapers carried the story that the Government had made inquiries, allegedly directly with Te Whiti, and had learnt that he did not approve of the objective of the petition. When comment was sought from Parata, he insisted that he had been given a broad authority to act as necessary in Te Whiti’s interests.<sup>312</sup> As a result, when the matter of the petition was again brought before the House on 3 June, with the request that the matter be considered, a motion was passed to carry on with the business of the day.<sup>313</sup> The petition was finally withdrawn from the House’s Order Papers on 15 June.<sup>314</sup> Te Whiti was held without trial until 1883, when he then returned to Parihaka.

During the 1880s, Parata was often reported as being a “constant visitor” to Parihaka.<sup>315</sup> In April 1884, he was reported as being present at Parihaka during a discussion on whether a native committee should be appointed in the settlement.<sup>316</sup> When a reporter visited Parihaka in November 1884, he found Parata among those in Te Whiti’s whare enjoying lunch.<sup>317</sup> Parata’s presence at Parihaka was again reported in October 1885.<sup>318</sup> On one occasion Parata was reported as seeking to gain further support for Te Whiti’s work. In March 1885 he attended a Ngati Raukawa hui at Matararapa where he had urged that those at the meeting join with Te Whiti “and work under his laws.” His suggestion was strongly rejected, this result being reported

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<sup>310</sup>2 June 1882, *New Zealand Herald*, p.5

<sup>311</sup>2 June 1882, *Press*, p.3

<sup>312</sup>See for example 3 June 1882, *Grey River Argus*, p.2

<sup>313</sup>5 June 1882, *Inangahua Times*, p.2

<sup>314</sup>15 June 1882, *New Zealand Times*, p.2

<sup>315</sup>See for example 26 Mar 1885, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>316</sup>19 Apr 1884, *Hawera and Normanby Star*, p.2

<sup>317</sup>20 Nov 1884, *Otago Daily Times*, p.2

<sup>318</sup>3 Oct 1885, *Poverty Bay Herald*, p.2

as having “greatly annoyed” Parata.<sup>319</sup>

Of course, Parata was on hand to visit and assist Te Whiti and others of Parihaka when they were arrested for a second time in 1886 and held for six months.<sup>320</sup> When the prisoners were released from jail in January 1887, they stayed with Wi Parata at Waikanae for a few days as they made their way home to Taranaki.<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>319</sup>26 Mar 1885, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>320</sup>28 Jul 1886, *Evening Post*, p.3

<sup>321</sup>11 Jan 1887, *Evening Post*, p.2

## **Parata and Local Issues 1880-1900**

As noted in the Introduction, the focus of this report is to examine Parata's reported public life in relation to a range of regional and national issues outside of Waikanae. The primary reason for this, is that Parata's story at Waikanae has largely been reported on in a previous report. This subsection of the report, however, which presents a series of vignettes of Parata's actions or words relating to local issues in the Waikanae district, is an exception to the overall methodology of the report. The reason for the exception is the belief that each short account will provide additional information and understanding on Parata's actions in his home area.

### **Roads and Railways at Waikanae**

Available early evidence, from his time in the House of Representative, suggests that initially Parata was ambivalent in his view of roading. On 12 September 1871, Parata spoke to the House on the subject of the Highway Boards Bill. This Bill conferred on Highway Boards a number of powers including the power to rate property held under Crown and Native title.<sup>322</sup> Parata spoke against the Bill:

Let the law be as heretofore: let the Government make the roads, and allow the Maoris to go over them without paying for them. The Maoris at present are not rich enough to pay these taxes. They were poor at the beginning, and are so still. Let the Government ask the chiefs for the land through which the road is to run and they will give it.<sup>323</sup>

Almost a decade later, as roading was beginning to be extended into the Waikanae district, Parata took a leading role in interacting with responsible authorities. In October 1880, Parata wrote to the local County Councils inviting them to a meeting to be held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of that month to discuss the subject of establishing roads through Maori lands on the west coast between Paekakariki and Otaki.<sup>324</sup> Subsequently, the meeting was reported in the newspapers as not being "of a very satisfactory character" primarily due to the following: "the only grounds on which the natives would consent to the construction of the road was, that there should be no taxes of any kind imposed upon them "for ever." Of course it was explained that such a promise could not be

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<sup>322</sup>12 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.358

<sup>323</sup>12 Sept 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.10, p.359

<sup>324</sup>12 Oct 1880, *Evening Post*, p.2

made.”<sup>325</sup>

Despite these strongly stated views, nothing further was found on Parata and roading in the limited research conducted for this project. There was, however, material found in relation to railways. Once again, while in Parliament, Parata had expressed his views in relation to railways. On 27 October 1871, the Immigration and Public Works Bill came before the House for a second reading. This Bill had a number of clauses including one relating to the establishment of a Board of Works with strong powers and provisions for local rating and conveyance of land for railway purposes. Parata raised an issue regarding the lands to be utilised for railway purposes.

With regard to the lands over which the railways are to run, the Government should buy those lands; if not, they will be a source of trouble. The Maoris would like the Government to buy those lands over which the railways have to run, because, if not, there will be trouble caused. If the Maoris should object to railways going over their land, the Government should not press it; they should carry out the matter carefully, they should do it quietly, and not in too hurried a manner. If the Government act in the manner I propose, all the railways will be carried out properly, and there will not be the evils which have happened in the past.<sup>326</sup>

....There had been a great deal of trouble in this Island, so I hope the Government will not act in a harsh manner in pressing forward the railways but will carry out everything in a careful way, so as to prevent any trouble occurring.<sup>327</sup>

By 1884, there were plans in place for the railway between Manawatu and Wellington to extend through the Ngarara block of land belonging to Ngatiawa. During June 1884, there was a meeting held at Waikanae involving Ngatiawa and two representatives of the railway company to discuss the terms on which the railway should be allowed to pass through the land. The meeting was held in front of the runanga building which had been designed by Parata and erected not long before. The house fronted on to the sea and Wi Parata had called it ‘Whakarongatae’ meaning “Listen to the voice of the tides’. The *Evening Post* reporter referred to the significance of the name remarking that: “The name was an exhortation to the tribe to listen not only to what the ‘wild waves are saying’, but to the tides of progress and advancement, social and physical, observable around them.” The article suggested that Parata had been

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<sup>325</sup> 23 Oct 1880, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>326</sup> 27 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.616

<sup>327</sup> 27 Oct 1871, *NZPD*, Vol.11, p.616

studying Shakespeare and that he meant to be “equally philosophical and practical in his efforts to elevate his people”.<sup>328</sup>

Alexander McDonald, a representative for the railway, presented a map showing the land the company required for the railway. According to an *Evening Post* article, Wi Parata “...expressed the desire of the tribe to facilitate the making of the railway, and welcomed it because it would bring great good to his people.”<sup>329</sup> Parata also made clear to those present that:

...that the tribe had resolved to hold their lands in tribal interest and allow no subdivision. Whatever boon the railway brought was for the benefit of all.<sup>330</sup>

Towards the end of the meeting, Wi Parata stated that the tribe had agreed to give a free right-of-way for the railway through their lands, a distance of nearly seven miles, and indicated that he would sign an agreement on behalf of Ngatiawa to that effect. Following the meeting, this agreement was signed at Parata’s house. The newspaper noted that this was a “generous gift” by Ngatiawa. This was reported to be in contrast to the opposition from many Europeans whose land the railway was to pass through.<sup>331</sup> A further report on the agreement referred to the Ngatiawa’s appreciation of the value the railway would add to their land in the area.<sup>332</sup>

In November 1886, a ceremony was held to celebrate the completion of the Wellington-Manawatu Railway. Wi Parata sent his apologies, being unable to attend on the account of the death of a near relative. Nevertheless, the Chairman of the Railways referred to the eight miles of land through Ngararawhich the railway had been given free of cost remarking that this generosity was in contrast to many Europeans in the area.<sup>333</sup>

A subsequent letter to the Editor of the *Evening Post* pointed out that this gift of land to the railway was not just from Wi Parata but also from the probably more than one hundred other Maori who owned conjointly with him. It was also noted that a number of Europeans had also provided land to the railway.<sup>334</sup> In December 1886, Inia Tuhata wrote a letter to the *New Zealand*

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<sup>328</sup> 30 June 1884, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>329</sup> 30 June 1884, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>330</sup> 30 June 1884, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>331</sup> 30 June 1884, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>332</sup> 30 July 1884, *Thames Star*, p.2

<sup>333</sup> 4 Nov 1886, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>334</sup> 12 Nov 1886, *Evening Post*, p.3

*Times* maintaining that he was one of the owners of the Ngatiawa land given to the railway by Wi Parata and wanted to it known that he objected to his share being given.<sup>335</sup>

As part of the agreement to provide the land for the railway, Wi Parata, on behalf of Ngatiawa, made some stipulations in relation to the stations and crossings that would be established.<sup>336</sup> A later article indicated that Parata had made it a condition that every train should stop at Waikanae. The Railway Company subsequently tried to run a few trains past the station but Parata “pulled them up and every train had to stop at Waikanae”.

One way in which Parata maintained his relationship with the railway company was by holding annual picnics for railway staff. In December 1895, it was reported that Wi Parata lent some of the picturesque, tree-clad land on the banks of the Waikanae River for the Wellington-Manawatu Railway employees’ picnic.<sup>337</sup> This became an annual event and a report in February 1899 indicated that the picnic that year was attended by about 800 people from Wellington as well as several hundred from Palmerston, Levin and Ohau.<sup>338</sup>

By 1927, after Parata had been dead for some years, it was reported that the trains no longer stopped at Waikanae so frequently.<sup>339</sup>

## **Resource Protection**

A small collection of newspaper articles have been found recording examples of Parata’s perspective or actions in relation to the preservation of natural resources. Interesting in themselves, and for what they say about Wi Parata, these articles are presented as a series of separate accounts:

- During March 1880, Wi Parata appeared before the Native Land Court in relation to his claim involving a place called Parumoana, which incorporated the foreshore and water of the southern arm of Porirua Harbour. It was reported by the *New Zealand Times* that

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<sup>335</sup> 22 Dec 1886, *NZ Times*, p.3

<sup>336</sup> 1 July 1884, *The NZ Times*, p.2

<sup>337</sup> 30 Nov 1895, *Evening Post*, p.3; see also 6 Dec 1895, *Feilding Star*, p.2

<sup>338</sup> 15 Feb 1899, *Evening Post*, p.4

<sup>339</sup> 8 April 1927, *Horowhenua Chronicle*, p.4

Parata's object in making this claim was "...undoubtedly to secure the ground over which the West Coast railway must pass, or some three miles of beach to the bridge at the heads." It was noted that the Maori were using the recent cases dealing with the Thames foreshore as a precedent. Maori in that case claimed the tidal flats in relation to their traditional gathering of shellfish in the area and pled that their fisheries were secured to them by the Treaty of Waitangi.<sup>340</sup> The outcome of this case has not been researched.

- On 14 February 1896, Wi Parata travelled to Wellington to meet with Government officials regarding a close season being observed for mussels on a group of rocks known as 'Kapukapuariki' located in the Paekakariki District. The area had been always treated as a preserve. When all the land in the vicinity had been sold to the Crown, a reserve immediately adjoining the shellfish beds had been made so that close seasons could be exercised in respect to the mussels. However, Pakeha had begun to gather the mussels from this place for commercial purposes.<sup>341</sup> Parata spoke to James Carroll regarding this issue, requesting that as these were the only mussel-bearing rocks in the vicinity they should be preserved by having a close season the same as for oysters which could be done under legislation. Carroll promised to lay the matter before the Premier.<sup>342</sup> Parata was later remembered for his protection of the kuku or mussel bed at Paekakariki. In 1908, the local Maori expressed their dissatisfaction over the subsequent removal of boulders, spoiling these beds which had always been protected by Parata.<sup>343</sup>
- In September 1902, Wi Parata offered to convert the seaward face of the "magnificent forest clad hill" just behind the Wellington-Manawatu railway line between Waikanae and Hadfield into a public reserve to preserve the bush. It was considered that the terms proposed by Parata would probably necessitate a special Act of Parliament and therefore, Parata met with the Ministers of Lands and Native Affairs as well as William Hughes Field the parliamentary representative for Otaki.<sup>344</sup> The matter was not followed through with at this time. In October 1906, shortly after the death of Parata, Field asked the Minister of Lands whether he would, without delay, acquire the land as it was reported that the hill was likely to soon to be purchased by a European at which time the bush would doubtless be destroyed. The Minister of Lands described the land in question as

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<sup>340</sup> 29 March 1880, *NZ Times*, p.3

<sup>341</sup> 15 Feb 1896, *NZ Times*, p.2

<sup>342</sup> 15 Feb 1896, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>343</sup> 2 Oct 1908, *Dominion*, p.2

<sup>344</sup> 4 Sept 1902, *Greymouth Evening Star*, p.4

being part of the Ngarara West C No.41 Block which was the subject of a recommendation by the Scenery Preservation Commissioners who had considered that about 850 acres were suitable for reservation. He referred to the late Wi Parata's intention to donate the land for the purpose of a reserve but confirmed that no steps had been taken to resolve the matter.<sup>345</sup> Hemi Matenga, the brother of Wi Parata, wrote to the editor of the *Evening Post* regarding Field's efforts noting that "Wi Parata was always anxious to preserve the forest, and when granting any leases of the flat land he made stringent provisions for the preservation of the forest on the slopes." Matenga indicated that he had always urged upon Parata the advisability of saving the forest on that land and further remarked that as he had succeeded to this land under the provisions of Parata's will, he intended to preserve the forest with the same care. Matenga resented that Field had not spoken to him about the land before publicly urging the Government to acquire it.<sup>346</sup>

- Wi Parata had a predominating interest in two areas of Maori land located on Kapiti Island. After his death it was reported that he consistently refused to part with any portion of these lands.<sup>347</sup> Parata was reported to have taken a particular interest in the Kapiti birds and "would not allow them to be molested." At one time he had some wekas imported from the West Coast Sounds and liberated on the island.<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>345</sup> 12 Oct 1906, *Evening Post*, p.5

<sup>346</sup> 15 Oct 1906, *Evening Post*, p.3

<sup>347</sup> 11 March 1908, *NZ Herald*, p.6

<sup>348</sup> 4 Aug 1911, *Lyttelton Times*, p.8



## Parata and National Politics during the 1890s

In addition to his involvement in Parihaka and his own local issues, over the 1890s Parata would also be associated with national unity movements that were growing among Maori. During the 1870s and 1880s, Maori efforts to achieve a forum for their unified concerns resulted in two different Kotahitanga parliamentary movements. The first Maori parliament was held at Orakei in Auckland in 1879. This took place in the house named Kohimarama after the 1860 Kohimarama meeting of chiefs. This initial Parliament was organised by Paora Tuhaere to talk about the Covenant of Kohimarama as well as the Treaty of Waitangi.<sup>349</sup> Further major tribal meetings, specifically called Maori Parliaments, were held by Paora Tuhaere at Orakei in 1880 and 1889.<sup>350</sup> Parata was recorded as being present at the final Orakei parliament held in March 1889.<sup>351</sup>

In the meantime, other hui to discuss national issues facing Maori were held around the country. On 1 May 1888, Wi Parata was one of several speakers at a large meeting held at Putiki who welcomed the Premier, Native Minister, Colonial Secretary and other Members of Parliament. According to the *Wanganui Herald*, Parata stated the purpose of the hui:

They had come ...to consider the Acts which bore hard on the Maori people. This was not a usual Maori meeting, but a meeting to consider the grievances of the Maoris only. He asked a question, not exactly a question, but more of an accusation. One of their grievances was confiscation. That was a great grievance laid on them. That was a long time ago and they had given it up. But there were others.<sup>352</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> Keane, Basil, 'Kotahitanga – unity movements - Parliamentary unity movements, 1870 to 1900', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/kotahitanga-unity-movements/page-3> (accessed 12 February 2019); see also Waitangi Tribunal, *Orakei report: report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Orakei claim (Wai-9)*, Brooker and Friend Ltd. 1991, Wellington, p.52

<sup>350</sup> Waitangi Tribunal, *Orakei report: report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Orakei claim (Wai-9)*, Brooker and Friend Ltd. 1991, Wellington, p.57

<sup>351</sup> 28 Mar 1889, *Auckland Star*, p.5

<sup>352</sup> 1 May 1888, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

## Commentary on Legislation

During the 1890s, one of the key roles performed by Parata within the national political scene was his ability to provide commentary on the various legislative proposals brought forward by Government. A forerunner of this was seen at the 1888 Putiki hui noted above when Parata brought the matter of the post-confiscation West Coast Settlement Reserves:

They were fortunately the owners of the land. According to the laws they were only the children of the Government, and not the owners of the Island. They had now been fenced in and kept there. All their law was in the hands of the Government, and they asked how they were to be relieved from this grievance...<sup>353</sup>

On 1 August 1891, Wi Parata was one of the principal speakers of a deputation of around fifty North Island Maori who travelled to the Government Buildings to meet with Members of the House of Representatives, Cadman, McKenzie and Ward to express their opposition to the Native Land Settlement Bill which aimed to end private purchasing and provide that a Board be brought into existence that would deal with all aspects regarding the administration of Maori land.<sup>354</sup> In January 1892, Wi Parata spoke at a large meeting of Maori held at Parikino, on the banks of the Wanganui River. The meeting involved representatives from many tribes throughout the country. The Premier and the Native Minister had been invited but government representatives had chosen not to attend. This gathering discussed a range of Bills before Parliament that potentially affected Maori land:

These Bills are for *all* Natives in New Zealand, and on them the lash of the Government whip is to fall, and it will cut death into them. The duty of our members is to avert this evil from us. This is a meeting involving the welfare of the whole of the Maoris, not for a small section or a large section, but for a united whole. You all feel pain, but you will experience a much greater wrong if these things are allowed to go on.<sup>355</sup>

Parata observed that Maori had initially considered the Native Land Courts would be beneficial before realising how their lands would be affected over time:

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<sup>353</sup> 1 May 1888, *Wanganui Herald*, p.2

<sup>354</sup> 1 Aug 1891, *Auckland Star*, p.5; see also 1 Aug 1891, *Star*, p.3

<sup>355</sup> 14 January 1892, *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.2

The wish of the natives was for the Native Land Courts. This evil item was not brought by the Europeans, but by the natives themselves. This was clever of the pakeha, but the natives found they had brought a strange destroyer upon them by an old familiar name...<sup>356</sup>

KeepaTe Rangihwinui, who had called the Parakino meeting, indicated that he would travel the country spreading the word against the Bills. Parata told those assembled that he and Arawa and all the tribes should lighten the burden on Te Keepa commenting: "If all felt the pain then all will unite in seeking a remedy". Parata spoke further to those attending the meeting, "...I tell you that if you men let this chance to free yourselves pass, that the rising water will soon be above your throats." He spoke of asking those at Whanganui three years previously why they had cut up their land and he was told by them that it had been conquered and he "fell back abashed". He concluded:

Taitoko [Keepa Te Rangihwinui] and I have only one thing to lay before you this day: these Bills must be destroyed and the Native Land Courts cleaned out...<sup>357</sup>

The *Evening Post* described how Parata's speech resulted in screams, wild cheers and clapping.

It was proposed that Maori should form a Committee to work out a plan to oppose the Bills. Most of those present spoke against the Bills but some wanted to further consider the Bills and discuss the matter with their people before deciding on a course of action. At the end of the meeting the hundreds present were asked if they were agreeable to the Bills and were reported to have as one man yelled out "Kahore" and in response to being asked if they were agreeable to the Bills being "utterly destroyed" they shouted with one voice "Ae, ae".<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> 14 January 1892, *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.2

<sup>357</sup> 14 January 1892, *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.2

<sup>358</sup> 14 January 1892, *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.2

## The 1892 Waitangi Parliament

Later in 1892 another Parliament was held when the two kotahitanga movements came together at Waitangi.<sup>359</sup> A decision was made by those who attended the meeting at Te Tiriti o Waitangi marae to formally establish the unity movement Te Kotahitanga o TeTiriti o Waitangi / the Unity of the Treaty of Waitangi to be headed by a parliament.<sup>360</sup> Parata was one of those who attended the parliament that was held at Waitangi in April 1892.<sup>361</sup> It was at this Parliament that decisions were made about the ongoing structure of the Maori Parliament including national elections.<sup>362</sup> It appears that one of the topics discussed at this parliament was a site at which permanent parliamentary buildings could be established. A budget of £3000 was voted for the purpose. By July, it was reported that Parata had offered 500 acres at Waikanae for the establishment of the parliament there. Although no further evidence was found of what became of this offer, the significance of this evidence is that it reflects the large degree to which Parata was supporting the parliamentary movement.<sup>363</sup>

In August 1892, in the aftermath of the Waitangi Parliament, Wi Parata was one of a large number of Maori chiefs who gathered in Wellington. They invited Alfred Cadman, the Minister of Native Affairs, to meet with them. On 3 August this meeting took place at the Parliamentary Buildings. The deputation submitted a resolution that the West Coast Native Settlement Reserves Bill should be withdrawn and the reserves handed back to the control of Maori who would select among themselves a committee of management. Henare Tomoana on behalf of the deputation also stated that: “With regard to the proposal to include a portion of the North Island within the Rohepotae, the resolution passed that the natives should have full rights over their own lands, and that their authority should not be interfered with”.

It was reported that at this meeting, Wi Parata “...made strong complaint that the authority of the natives over their own lands had been greatly curtailed, the Court not now being guided by

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<sup>359</sup> Keane, Basil, ‘Kotahitanga – unity movements - Parliamentary unity movements, 1870 to 1900’, Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/kotahitanga-unity-movements/page-3> (accessed 12 February 2019)

<sup>360</sup> Hill, Richard S. *State Authority, Indigenous Autonomy: Crown-Maori relations in New Zealand/Aotearoa 1900-1950*, Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2004, p.36

<sup>361</sup> 14 Apr 1892, *New Zealand Times*, p.2

<sup>362</sup> Keane, Basil, ‘Kotahitanga – unity movements - Parliamentary unity movements, 1870 to 1900’, Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/kotahitanga-unity-movements/page-3> (accessed 12 February 2019)

<sup>363</sup> 21 Jul 1892, *Woodville Examiner*, p.2

native manner and customs.” He stated that: “They protested against a ukase being placed over three million acres of land to be subsequently taken away from them without consulting their wishes, and urged that the land be left under the Treaty of Waitangi.” Parata also “referred to the charge of restrictions being placed upon the land to prevent it being leased or dealt with”, and thereby “preventing the owners deriving any benefit therefrom.” Parata told Cadman that there “...was a movement amongst the Maoris to unite both Islands in the formation of a Native Parliament to manage native affairs...’ but he commented that “ ...this was not done in any spirit of hostility to the existing law”.<sup>364</sup>

Other members of the deputation spoke strongly in support of the resolutions submitted to the Native Minister urging that Maori should have a voice in the legislation. It was commented that “Great abuses had crept into the law, and the administration of the native Judges did not give them satisfaction”. Cadman was told that: “They wanted the Native Land Court abolished absolutely.”<sup>365</sup>

### **1893: Regal Visit, Waipatu Parliament and Subsequent Petition**

It was in this context of heightened political activity that on 14 January 1893, while on a tour of several districts, the Governor came to Waikanae. Evidence of this visit has already been presented in a previous report. It is reproduced in this report, as the previous subsections provide a better context to understand Parata's remarks. A large party of Maori assembled on the railway platform to greet the Governor's party. The Otaki Maori Brass Band played the National Anthem and the party moved onto the marae. During speeches Parata stated that his tribe were very pleased to see His Excellency. He emphasised that the European coming amongst Maori had bought English law and the effect of these laws had “been to wipe out old customs”. The consequence of this was that “custom things had become confused”:

The land laws which had been imposed by the Europeans were not just to the native race because they enabled white people to usurp the lands, leaving nothing for the Maori.

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<sup>364</sup> 6 Aug 1892, *Hawera & Normanby Star*, p.2

<sup>365</sup> 6 Aug 1892, *Hawera & Normanby Star*, p.2

Maori also recognised, however that their lands had been increased in value and “they had no doubt that by future wise legislation and the wise guidance of His Excellency the grievances which he (Wi Parata) had referred to would be rectified”:

If more harmonious laws were introduced, then there would be peace and happiness amongst the two races. He had always welcomed the Europeans and had advised his people to do the same, and treat them well, as it would be for their benefit in the end.

In response, the Governor stated he was “very agreeable surprised” at meeting with “such a very cordial reception from the Natives”. He thanked Wi Parata for the “kind words he had used and for his expressions of loyalty”. The Governor expressed his regret of not visiting earlier:

His Excellency said he would be careful in advising his Ministers to frame land laws which would always bring peace and harmony to the two races. So far as he was concerned, he would place no obstacle in the way of attaining this end.<sup>366</sup>

Parata attended the next Maori parliament held at Waipatu in April 1893.<sup>367</sup> During this Parliament a petition was formulated. The lengthy petition from Major KeepaTe Rangihwinui and others in connection with the proposed Maori Parliament had 21,900 signatories. It outlined how Maori had been affected by Europeans from 1835 onwards and highlighted the detrimental effects caused to them and their lands by many of the laws made in Parliament. They asked for the House to grant them the following:

- (1) That the right to manage our own property be given back to us...
- (2) That the power to govern the Natives be delegated to the Federated Maori Assembly of New Zealand.
- (3) That the said Assembly consist of an Upper and Lower House. The Upper to consist of the chiefs by birth.
- (4) And the Lower House shall consist of Natives who shall be elected by the different tribes to represent them in the Assembly.
- (5) That said Federated Assembly consist of Natives who shall be elected by the different tribes to represent them in the Assembly.<sup>368</sup>

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<sup>366</sup> 14 Jan 1893, *Evening Post*

<sup>367</sup> 18 Apr 1893, *New Zealand Herald*, p.5

<sup>368</sup> Petition of Major KeepaRangihwinui and others in connection with the proposed Maori Parliament, 1893.

Annexed to the petition was a Bill which had been passed at the meeting of the Federated Maori Assembly held at Waipatu on 22 May 1893. This Bill under the name of the 'Federated Maori Assembly Empowering Bill' was 'An Act to empower the Maoris to enact Laws in respect of their own Properties'. This called for the abolishment of the Native Land Courts and the establishment of District Committees to administer land, giving Maori the right to deal with the lands on the same footing as Europeans.<sup>369</sup>

Parata was among the deputation of seven representatives appointed to meet the Native Minister Cadman. One of the aims of the meeting was to gain an interview with the Governor which was duly arranged. As might be expected, when presented with the petition, the Governor merely informed the deputation that he, along with government ministers, would give the petition careful consideration.<sup>370</sup>

During August 1893, Parata and other petitioners appeared before a Parliamentary Committee to present the petition. Over 5 and 6 August, Parata spoke extensively about the history of Maori and European contact and the injustices caused by the Native Land Acts. He told the Committee members that the petition was applied for under the Treaty of Waitangi and was based on the conditions contained within the 1852 Constitution Act. He emphasised that that the petitioners wanted the Native Land Courts to cease.<sup>371</sup>

A few months later, in September, a larger delegation of about forty representatives met the Governor and Premier in Wellington. Parata was identified as being the chief spokesman.

[Parata] made a lengthy but lucid statement of the grievances of which the natives complain, pointing out certain clauses in the Treaty of Waitangi and the New Zealand Constitution Act, also quoting from the Royal Instructions, wherein a total departure has been made to the great detriment of the Maori race. He earnestly implored the Governor to refuse to assent in Her Majesty's name to several of the Government measures dealing with native lands so as to give the natives an opportunity of sending a memorial to the Imperial Government.<sup>372</sup>

The Governor replied by explaining that the role of the Governor now in New Zealand was

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<sup>369</sup> Petition of Major KeepaRangihwinui and others in connection with the proposed Maori Parliament, 1893.

<sup>370</sup> 7 Jun 1893, *New Zealand Times*, p.2

<sup>371</sup> 4-5 Aug 1893, Minutes of Petitioners meeting Parliamentary Committee, pp.6-11 Petition of Major KeepaRangihwinui and others in connection with the proposed Maori Parliament, 1893.

<sup>372</sup> 12 Sep 1893, *New Zealand Herald*, p.5

“almost nominal” and that is why he asked the Premier to be present at the meeting. Nevertheless, he would be happy to present any memorial to the Queen that they wished.

Parata also was recorded among the attendees at the parliament held at Pakirikiri in April 1894.<sup>373</sup>

### **Parata’s Widening Opposition**

In February 1896, a correspondent for the *Otago Witness* visited Waikanae and spoke with Wi Parata. His interview provides insight into Parata’s mindset at this time. (Information on this visit also has been presented in a previous report, but again the evidence of previous subsections provide a better context to evaluate Parata's words).

After the visit, the correspondent reported that Parata was “full of bitter animosities as regards the pakeha, whom he once loved”. He quoted Parata as follows:

“But,” says he to me, with bitter sarcasm. “how can any true Maori with all the natural love of his native land in him feel good will to the pakeha who is always cheating, swindling, and robbing him of his patrimony? So long as the Maori has plenty of rich lands the pakeha will readily bow and scrape to him and treat him as a man of mighty mana; but ho! let that Maori lose his land, and the same pakeha puts his tongue in his cheek and turns away his face. Then look what the Treaty of Waitangi says: “The pakeha may look at the Maori, but the Maori must not look at the pakeha”.<sup>374</sup>

Parata concluded the interview by saying, “My word to the Maori race is to keep fast hold on the land, and just show the pakeha that the Maori is quite as good as he?” Parata was described as setting off in “high dudgeon” but seeing the dismay of the interviewer, he returned laughing to shake his hand commenting that “Pakehas are not all alike. Like the Maoris, there are some good, some bad, and many indifferent”. According to the reporter, Parata then “stalked off with the gait of a lion, the mien of a king”.<sup>375</sup>

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<sup>373</sup>5 Apr 1894, *Auckland Star*, p.2

<sup>374</sup> 6 Feb 1896, *Otago Witness*, p.19

<sup>375</sup> 6 Feb 1896, *Otago Witness*, p.19



Despite the despondency evident in the 1896 interview, Parata remained an active commentator on land issues. A number of years later, in May 1898, Wi Parata spoke of land legislation at a gathering following the tangi of Keepa Te Rangihwinui. The day after the burial, James Carroll asked the assembled tribes to allow him to explain a new Bill affecting Maori lands that was going to be introduced to Parliament. Following Carroll's explanation, Parata addressed those present, first paying his respects to Te Keepa whom he described as the "foremost and best-respected Maori chief in our land" and as a man who had spent his life in "endeavouring to secure for the Maori people the rights which naturally belong to them". He then went on to speak on the subject of the Bill:

You (Mr. Carroll) have announced to us its effect and asked to give consideration to it. This we will do. I would, however, ask you whether under it the reserves will be exempt from taxation, and whether all reserves will continue to remain under the management of the Public Trustee?<sup>376</sup>

He pointed out that the administration by the Public Trustee had caused "the greatest dissatisfaction" to the West Coast Maori. He also questioned the sincerity of the Government as follows:

I ask you, if your Government is sincere in the platform laid down by you to reserve the remainder of our land, to explain the inconsistency in having quite recently, without the knowledge of the owners, confiscated Kapiti.<sup>377</sup>

Parata then raised the issue of "landless natives" with Carroll.

You say your Bill makes provision for these. Let me remind you that the lands commencing at Pareninihi and extending to Parekino and from Waitotara to Pareninihi were confiscated. That was the result of the war, and was our first trouble. Subsequently we suffered for ploughing lands we looked upon as our own; then we had the Parihaka raid by Mr. Bryce, which affected us injuriously, and now our greatest trouble is the maladministration of the remnant of our lands by the Public Trustee; if you have the aroha you express to have, why do you not give relief to those who are suffering under injustice? Again, why does this Government so brimming over with affection for the Maoris, permit my people to remain in gaol?<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>376</sup> 5 May 1898, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>377</sup> 5 May 1898, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>378</sup> 5 May 1898, *Evening Post*, p.2

Carroll responded that he was not able to release those in gaol but would consult with his colleagues in Wellington and reply to Parata at a subsequent time. Parata indicated that he would not ask him personally to release them. Parata then went on to address additional issues in relation to the proposed Bill:

Now, referring to the Bill, I was present with Kemp at Waipatu when its provisions were explained by the Premier. There are two points in it acceptable to all the Maoris. These are:

- (1) Stoppage of sales to Government and individuals, and
- (2) The abolition of the Native Land Court...<sup>379</sup>

Parata observed that if the Bill stopped at that, then Maori would accept it. He told Carroll that Maori would not accept the additional 25 or more clauses that were in the Bill as they considered that "...their effect must be most injurious to the natives." He remarked to Carroll that with all his affection towards Maori, could he not see his way to permit the Maori to "devise means and frame a Bill which would bring them relief?" He stated that the stoppage of sales and the abolition of the Court lay entirely in the hands of the Government and indicated that when the Government had achieved this, they should then let the Maori consider what had to be come next.<sup>380</sup>

Carroll responded that if Parata had devised any scheme that was more acceptable than their Bill, he should let them have it.<sup>381</sup> The irony of Carroll's words would not have been lost on Parata as he and many others had already spent decades doing exactly that without achieving any result.

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<sup>379</sup> 5 May 1898, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>380</sup> 5 May 1898, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>381</sup> 5 May 1898, *Evening Post*, p.2

## Governor's Otaki Visit 1899

The following year, on 7 August 1899, Wi Parata was among those who welcomed Governor Ranfurly on his first official visit to Otaki. The Governor was accompanied by the Premier and several members of Parliament. Otaki held a holiday in honour of the Governor's visit which included the opening of the Otaki Cottage Hospital. Shortly after the arrival of the officials, following a visit to the Maori Church, a procession formed, and led by the Maori Band proceeded to the Maori part of Otaki township halting in front of the Raukawa meeting house where the Governor and other officials were welcomed in a traditional manner. Wi Parata then, according to one *Evening Post* report, "...with dignity and courage voiced to the distinguished company the sense of wrongs of his people".<sup>382</sup> Another article in the same paper provided further details in relation to Parata's speech.

He spoke of the good feeling existing between the two races, referred to the history of the church which they had just visited, and then devoted some time to airing grievances against the Government and its interference with the Native and his land, and against the County Council in regard to taking land for roads, for he had found that the making of roads had not improved the price of lands.<sup>383</sup>

Parata told them that: "Laws were being made to take away more land" and argued that "...this infliction of the law-burden should ...be lightened, for this was causing the decadence of the Maori". As noted above, part of the reason for the Governor's visit was to open the Otaki Cottage Hospital, however; Parata asked:

Was it possible that the Maoris could be kept well by a person called a doctor, if there still continued grievances which affected their preservation in other ways, if their means of maintenance – their land – was taken from them.<sup>384</sup>

It was reported that Parata concluded his long speech "...by declaring that as a race the Maori was second to none..." and then extended a hearty welcome on their behalf to the Governor and the Premier.

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<sup>382</sup> 8 Aug 1899, *Evening Post*, p.4; see also 8 Aug 1899, *Evening Post*, p.2; 7 Aug 1899, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>383</sup> 8 Aug 1899, *Evening Post*, p.2; see also 7 Aug 1899, *Taranaki Herald*, p.2

<sup>384</sup> 8 Aug 1899, *Evening Post*, p.2

The Governor in response referred to the political nature of Parata's speech and indicated that it was "evidently intended" for Seddon, the Premier. An attempt was made to get Seddon to speak but he responded he was "out for a day's rest".<sup>385</sup>

Later that day, Seddon provided some response to the issues raised by Parata at a luncheon provided by the Horowhenua County Council. It is unclear in newspaper reports whether Parata was present. Seddon was reported to have referred to the Otaki district saying that "there was no doubt that the West Coast had not made that progress which had been made in other districts in the island". According to Seddon, it was the Maori themselves who had "...been the cause of this want of progress". He referred to Parata's earlier complaints regarding Government interference and told those at the luncheon that "...there was no hope for either Maoris or Europeans or the West Coast if consideration of the future of the native was not taken in hand." Seddon indicated that despite doing well at school, young Maori then became "idlers" and he expressed the hope that "some system of technical education and perhaps something like local self-government might be adopted by Parliament as a means towards improving the condition of the race."<sup>386</sup>

One *Evening Post* report pointed out that two years previously, the Premier's "great heart" had been "moved to such passionate pity at the nearing prospect of a landless native people that he was ready to legislate to protect them in possession of their lands for ever". However, it was noted that after a short time, "...the Pakeha land sharks among his following would not be denied his prey, and the Maori were abandoned to his fate". This reporter contended that Wi Parata was right, and "...the only medicine that can preserve the Maori people is inviolate ownership of their land, and that is surely passing from them." It was pointed out that:

Within the year, and not a day's journey from where the native chief yesterday voiced his protest and accusation, one of the richest and fairest areas of native lands, comprising thousands of acres, passed from its native owners for about one fifth its value. All this is pitiful, despicable and abominable...To talk to Wi Parata and his people of bestowing technical education and local self-government is to offer a stone where bread is asked.<sup>387</sup>

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<sup>385</sup> 8 Aug 1899, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>386</sup> 8 Aug 1899, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>387</sup> 8 Aug 1899, *Evening Post*, p.4

## Educational Trust Lands

Many years after Parata's case regarding the land at Whitireia had failed at the Supreme Court, there were further developments in relation to the issue of educational trust lands. The Anglican Synod discussed the issue at a meeting in Christchurch and it was reported that they wanted to remove any conditions on use noted on block titles. Following the meeting, they approached the Government and requested it "...give its consent to allowing the conditions of the reserves to be submitted to the Supreme Court in order that, as the original trusts, so it was alleged, could not be carried out, the Court might order what was to be done in the future".<sup>388</sup>

The Government was already aware of the issue. In May 1898, before a Maori gathering at Papawai, the Premier and Native Minister Richard Seddon remarked that it was "...a lasting disgrace to those who had been entrusted with those lands that they had done nothing in the direction intended by those who gave the lands". He spoke directly about the reserve at Porirua commenting that the Church at that time had over £6,000 in the bank and had "...never spent a £50 note on technical or any education..." of local Maori children. Seddon stated that it was time that the Government became involved and clearly noted that "the descendants of the original owners, were a party to the trusts, and had as much right to consider the question as the Synod in Christchurch."<sup>389</sup> Maori who were present to hear this speech were reported to be "delighted" at the Premier's suggestion and to have informed him that this was what Parata had fought for in the past.<sup>390</sup>

It was reported that the only way that the issue of the educational reserves could be resolved was through either special or general legislation. In 1898, a Porirua Reserve Bill was introduced into the House the reported object of which was "...presumably to take power for resumption of this land". The Bill did not proceed, however.<sup>391</sup> Instead, three years later, in March 1901, the Court of Appeal heard a preliminary motion in the case of the Solicitor General versus Wallis (the Bishop of Wellington) which had reference to the endowment known as the Porirua School Trust. The arguments for and against retention of land by the Church were made. During these, it was revealed that in the current action, and over time, "Wi Parata was behind the scenes in

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<sup>388</sup> 2 June 1898, *NZ Mail*, p.39

<sup>389</sup> 2 June 1898, *NZ Mail*, p.39

<sup>390</sup> 30 May 1898, *Evening Post*, p.4

<sup>391</sup> 24 Oct 1898, *Evening Post*, p.4

opposing the trustees”.<sup>392</sup>The Appeal Court decided in favour of the Government effort to acquire the land but this result was later reversed in the Privy Council.<sup>393</sup>

By December 1904, the issue of the Porirua Trust remained unresolved and was the subject of speeches by several leading Maori including Parata at a function at Otaki which was attended by the Premier. Parata used a metaphor of an axe during his speech and concluded by appealing to the Premier “...to give the people justice, and to cease from sharpening the axe...”<sup>394</sup>

Soon after, the Government was moved to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into matters connected with the native lands trusts for educational purposes situated at Porirua, Otaki and other places. During June 1905, Parata appeared before the Royal Commission when it took evidence at Otaki. Parata pointed out to the Commissioners that he did not wish the inquiry into the Porirua trusts to be mixed up with the Otaki trusts. He wanted them to be kept separate as he considered that investigating them together would cause delay and prolong the proceedings.<sup>395</sup> Parata referred to the Commission’s role of inquiring into the trusts and considering “...the funds and the expenditure and so on”. He remarked : “...Parliament had seen sufficient to show that the trusts had not been properly administered, and that was the reason the Commission had been appointed”. He spoke of the initial giving of this land for educational purposes:

He would like to point out that the Maoris gave the land, and then the pakehas made a Crown grant to take the land away from them, and he wished to know which of these two things was right and which was wrong. The land was given by the Maoris in the presence of all the people; but the Crown grant was issued unknown to the donors of the land; it was done in secret.<sup>396</sup>

The Commission continued to hear evidence on 9 June. At that time, a scheme that had been devised for the establishment of a Maori school at Otaki was read out to those Maori who were assembled. After the scheme had been read, the President called for any objectors and at this point Wi Parata came forward. Parata presented an account of how Christianity was brought to Otaki. He referred to Bishop Hadfield and the land being given at both Otaki and Porirua for the purpose of teaching the Maori people the principles of Christian religion. He spoke again of the 1850 Crown granting of this land at which time the conditions upon which the land was given

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<sup>392</sup> 19 March 1901, *NZ Times*, p.3

<sup>393</sup> 11 April 1903, *Oamaru Mail*, p.4

<sup>394</sup> 29 Dec 1904, *Evening Post*

<sup>395</sup> 7 June 1905, *NZ Times*, p.3

<sup>396</sup> 7 June 1905, *NZ Times*, p.3

were altered although the people who had given the land had no idea that it would be divested in this way. Parata particularly referred to the Porirua lands noting that after they had been lying idle for some time (between 1850 and 1860) the donors asked the church to give it back to them on the occasion of meeting Governor Browne in Auckland. Parata said that "...ever since then that end had been kept in view, and the requests for the return of the lands renewed". Parata provided evidence about his various failed attempts to get the land back through the Courts and through petitioning Parliament. He indicated that he still had hope in relation to the return of these lands. He further remarked:

At the time the land was given the Maoris still had their mana, but when the Crown grant was made that mana was set aside and the land was given under a different mana. He would like to know how that read with the Treaty of Waitangi...<sup>397</sup>

Parata told the Commission that "...if the Trusts could not be given effect to in their entirety they must lapse." He indicated that he could not approve of the scheme submitted to the Commission, commenting that: "The part he most disapproved of was the part in which it was said that Maori lads should be taught how to kill human beings (military drill)." He pointed out that this was "...not the work of religion; that was not the purpose for which the land was given."<sup>398</sup> Parata also spoke to the Commission of his own experience as a pupil at Otaki Mission School noting that the Maori students were taught to read and write in Maori only and for the most part were "...employed in tilling the soil". Parata stated to the Commission that the school now being proposed was too late.

The land was given, and the church failed in its trust, The Otaki School had now been administered by the Church of England for fifty-five years and nothing had been done to make it useful. It was time the land came back to its proper owners, who had given it first and worked to make it fit for cultivation.<sup>399</sup>

In accordance with the terms of inquiry, the 1905 commission of inquiry focused on the administration of the trust, the leases and the funds. It did not consider the return of the land. The Commission was the final recorded Government consideration of the issue of the educational trust lands despite the grievance persisting for decades thereafter.

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<sup>397</sup> 10 June 1905, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>398</sup> 10 June 1905, *Evening Post*, p.2

<sup>399</sup> 10 June 1905, *Evening Post*, p.2

## Parata's Death

Wiremu Parata died at his home at Waikanae on 29 September 1906. This was reported to be the result of an accident while horse riding.<sup>400</sup> A few days later, a tangi was being held in Waikanae attended by a “great congregation” of Maori, who were “flocking in by every train”. Parata was interred at Waikanae on 8 October after a week long tangi attended by Maori from all over the North Island as well as representatives from the South Island. Numerous chiefs representing many tribes were in attendance. It was estimated that there were between 1200 and 1300 Maori men, women and children present on 8 October. Those attending the tangi camped in a paddock located 100 yards from the Parata accommodation house in bell tents that had been supplied by the Government. There were also great marquees stretched over rough timber frames. Beautiful weather was reported to have prevailed during the tangi. When it was time for Parata's body to be taken to the church for the funeral service, the Otaki Maori brass band played a solemn march coming to a halt at the marae. After the church service a crowd of around 1500 Maori and Pakeha walked to the nearby cemetery for the internment.<sup>401</sup> One report suggested that the tangi was the largest “ever recorded in the colony...”<sup>402</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> 29 Sept 1906, *Evening Post*, p.5

<sup>401</sup> 9 Oct 1906, *NZ Times*, p.6; see also 20 Oct 1906, *Free Lance*, p.1

<sup>402</sup> 9 Oct 1906, *Evening Star*, p.8



## **SUMMARY AND COMMENTARY**

As noted within the Introduction, this report has been prepared within a limited timeframe and therefore has utilised just two sources - newspapers and NZPDs - to try and gain insight into the public and political life of Wiremu Te Kakakura Parata. Despite the limited research exercise, a comparatively large amount of material has been located on Parata between the years 1871, and his election to Parliament, and his death in 1906.

### **Parata enters Parliament**

With his mission station education and his appointment as Wi Tako's secretary, it appears that Wi Parata was being groomed to operate in a political world from a young age. Given his lineage and the role his mother played in affairs at Waikanae, this is not surprising. Parata was the son of Metapere Waipunahau who was described in 1853 as being solely responsible for restraining Ngati Toa claims against Ngatiawa land at Waikanae due to her position as the senior descendant of Te Rangi Hiroa and Te Pehi Kupe. Parata, however, was being trained to operate in the Pakeha world. His selection, therefore, as a candidate for the Western Maori electorate, on the one hand, was a continuation of his political career. On the other hand, it was a vastly new experience for the young man to face. The machinations of a Pakeha parliamentary world would be something that was difficult to prepare for. Parata was entering the House of Representatives at a time when the 'experiment' of the Maori seats was in its earliest years. The enabling legislation for this had been passed just four years earlier. The election that resulted in Parata's appointment as Member was only the second one held in which Maori electors could vote for their own candidates. Parliament had not yet adapted its processes to ensure even a minimum accommodation for the new parliamentarians. Legislation often was not translated into Maori leaving the members from the four seats to request that at least those Bills dealing with Maori issues should be translated before debates began.

There are varied reports as to Parata's ability to speak English when he was first elected to Parliament. One newspaper claimed that Parata understood and spoke English very well. On the other hand, in September 1871, a Pakeha parliamentarian said that Parata could understand what was being spoken in English, and that in turn he could express himself in "broken English", but

that in the House he generally spoke Maori. The long letter written by Parata to the *Evening Post* in September 1871, reflects Parata's ability to write in English. The letter puts across a number of responses to counter the various criticisms made regarding the position and views of Maori members. Often powerful turns of phrases are used. Nevertheless, in some places, the language is a bit awkward and some points get a bit lost.

Aside from the question of language, it is not known whether Parata himself felt ready for the role of Parliamentarian as he may not have expected success in his first election. As the report indicates, when Parata stood in the 1871 election he was by no means the favourite and it appears that, despite solid support in Wellington and Waikanae, his election only resulted from the standing of two prominent Whanganui chiefs - Keepa te Rangihwinui and Mete Kingi - who split the Whanganui voting bloc.

Nevertheless, the result was clear and he was the successful candidate for the Western Maori seat. The letter he published to the electorate soon thereafter is of significance. This shows that Parata, recognising that voting had proceeded in accordance with district loyalties, felt a need to explain to all his constituents his platform for working as their representative. Parata assured his constituents that in Parliament he would not be working to promote his own advance. Neither would he be seeking to advance the interests only of his own iwi. Parata seems to have some sensitivity about his part-Pakeha parentage as he asks his constituents that he be judged by his actions before he be assessed as to whether he is "English or Native". (On the other hand, Parata sometimes used his mixed parentage to appeal to Pakeha. When writing a letter to the editor of the *Evening Post* for publication that argued against the newspaper's anti-Maori representation stance, Parata addressed the letter to "my European relatives".)

In his open letter to constituents, Parata strongly stated that his main objective in Parliament was to support anything that would be good for Maori. This meant, he explained, that on some occasions he would be voting with the Government and on other occasions with the opposition. Despite taking this position, and subsequently reiterating it on several occasions, the question of whether he was merely a Government man would haunt Parata's career in Parliament.

Parata promised that he would never vote against the wishes of the people. Inherently this would be a difficult promise to keep. While a useful catch phrase, it would be near impossible for all Maori politicians representing multi-iwi electorates, to represent equally all the diverse interests

and perspectives of their constituents. To combat this, Parata urged his constituents to form an inter-iwi body of opinion on matters that were important to them that he could then represent in the House.

Within the House, Parata stated his philosophy on how Parliament should relate to Maori. When it came to making law for Maori, Parata often asked for empathy and compassion requesting that the laws not be carried out too harshly. He also asked for partnership when legislating for Maori as indicated in his 12 September 1871 speech: "With regard to the Maoris, let us work for a few years together, so that we can make laws together." As Parata noted on 15 September 1871, only when Maori saw some of their "desires" being passed into law, would they begin to believe that they and Pakeha were one people. Until then, the long-held belief of Maori "that the laws of the Europeans are different from their laws" would persist.

Parata also held that prior to Maori representation in Parliament, laws were brought into effect that impacted on Maori without there having been any consultation. On 15 September 1871, Parata noted that generally the government did not consult with Maori over the framing of laws despite claims to the contrary. He noted that consultation did occur when the government wanted to acquire land, but not otherwise. Acts specifically identified by Parata where had been a lack of consultation but where there was continuing impact on Maori included those that brought the Native Land Court into being and the post-war legislation that brought confiscation into effect.

Parata spoke several times in relation to the problems within the Native Land Court. According to Parata ongoing problems arose through Native Lands Acts not being translated and administrative regulations regarding practice within the Court not being explained. During his first session of Parliament, Parata suggested that as the current Native Land Act only had been passed in 1865, and now that there was Maori representation in Parliament, a new Act should be written. The reason for this, in Parata's view, was that the first Act had turned out to be something different to the understandings Maori had initially held: "The explanations in regard to that matter were very clear, and it was made to appear very nice, but when it was printed and explained to us, we found it was very different."

The need for new legislation was often referred to by Parata. In July 1872, Parata again noted that now Maori members were present in the House to help in the drafting of legislation a new opportunity was provided: "The old laws should, then, be set aside and new ones made."

## **The Key Issue of Confiscation**

Parata later recorded that one of the main instructions he had received from his electorate when he first entered Parliament was to secure a commission of inquiry into confiscated lands. The importance to Parata of the confiscated land issue is reflected in his letter to the *Evening Post* in September 1871: "The Government that would receive my hearty support would be the Government which would give back to the Maoris their lands which have been confiscated."

Not surprisingly, then, Parata was vigilant to guard against any development that might worsen the confiscated land situation. Parata therefore objected to the use of confiscated land for any public purpose before a full inquiry took place. In June 1871, he spoke against the utilisation of confiscated land for educational reserves or any other educational purposes. In October 1871, when the matter of harbour works in Taranaki were being discussed in the House, Parata stated he did not want to see any confiscated land being set apart as an endowment for the project. His persistent vigilance drew criticism from one Government Minister who stated of Parata "that he should adhere to the rules of debate and not drag in the confiscated lands on every occasion."

Parata felt that generally Maori had received uneven and disproportionate treatment over the war. Parata's view was that both sides had taken up arms and fought and that the matter should be left there. Instead of allowing bygones to be bygones, Parata felt that post-War Maori were unfairly shouldering the blame and the consequences. "He should like to know why the sword of the European should be upheld and the sword of the Maori not. It was said that it was on account of the murders committed by the Maoris that the land had been taken, but the murders by the Europeans had been just as bad. "

Parata's recorded belief was that the confiscation of land in the aftermath of war was a step too far and that it was not justified given previous promises that the Crown had made to Maori. In October 1871, Parata noted in Parliament that Maori had no idea that their land might ever be confiscated as a result of the fighting. In fact, according to Parata, Maori had been promised their land would not be taken away. Here Parata was alluding the clauses of the Treaty of Waitangi. He would add that to his knowledge, no law had passed that had set aside the Treaty. Further to this, Parata would often refer to the 1860 Kohimarama hui and the Governor's

promise there that land would not be taken away. In a significant speech on confiscated lands given by Parata in July 1872, he again referred to the Treaty of Waitangi and the 1860 Kohimarama hui noting that the text of Treaty and proceedings of the conference had been translated into Maori. As such, noted Parata, these were the only words from the Crown that Maori had in their possession. Within this context, the speeches at Kohimarama were viewed by Parata as being broken promises. Despite the European view that the wars had been caused by Maori, Parata would not admit that Maori were to blame until there had been an investigation.

The need for an investigation was also urged by Parata as he believed that the confiscation had included the land of "innocent persons". In addition, Parata felt that if the matter of the war and the confiscation of land was not addressed there were significant risks. He warned his parliamentary colleagues that if Parliament did not adopt "conciliatory measures" towards Maori the peace that existed in the colony was at risk.

The government that was in place when Parata entered the House was not interested in addressing matters relating to confiscation. In response to Parata, Native Minister McLean described confiscation as "just punishment for past deeds". Therefore he could not "entertain for a moment the question of giving up their hold" on confiscated land. Other Government members viewed Parata's tendency to bring up the subject of confiscation as "injudicious". Despite a claim in response by Native Minister McLean that not all Maori were focused on the return of confiscated land, Parata responded that he did not speak for himself or his tribe, but that it was a universally held perspective among Maori that the confiscated lands should be returned.

Not surprisingly, Parata was somewhat downhearted after his first session in Parliament. When attending a hui in Parihaka in 1872 he reported "that he had brought the question of the confiscation before the House without avail..." Given this, Parata advised those present to come to some settlement with the Government.

## **Maori Representation**

Aside from land confiscation, the other significant issue that met Parata in his first years in Parliament was the question of Maori representation. This issue has several components to it. One key aspect of Maori representation revolved around the effort by the Maori parliamentarians to increase the number of electorate seats. Karaitiana Takamoana's motion of 15 September 1871 revealed a belief that the optimum number of seats to represent Maori in the House was 12. To encourage support for this approval, it was even suggested that Pakeha could vote in a Maori electorate.

Although this report has nowhere near fully researched the broad subject of Maori representation, focusing instead only on Parata's views and comments in relation to this significant issue, it can be gleaned from some of the response to or about Parata that there was a body of opinion that was severely critical of any suggestions to increase the number of Maori seats or, for that matter, to maintain any provision for Maori electorate representation in Parliament. Those who advocated against the Maori seats made their point by arguing that any views, ideas or proposals expressed by Maori members did not come from them but were the result of suggestions that come from pakeha, particularly the government. This is demonstrated in the *Evening Post* editor's response to Parata. Although he acknowledged that the cohort of Maori parliamentarians who came into the House in 1871 were "a superior sample to their predecessors", they were not good enough to be involved in discussion and decisionmaking over matters that affected the pakeha majority or the nation's development and future. The editor noted that it was "perfectly preposterous" that "men like these" should be allowed to take part in the consideration of national matters.

In his long letter written to the editor of the *Evening Post*, Parata sought to address the paper's criticism of Maori representation. He began by noting that Maori members of the House represented those who voted them into Parliament and not pakeha: "We do not belong to the 'clan McLean'; we belong to the clan Maori." Later in the letter he asked readers to reject any suggestion that the government has put ideas into heads of Maori members adding, "We are men" and noting that the Government had not really accepted any of the proposal put forward by the Maori members. Explaining that the Maori parliamentarians were elected with the aim that

laws passed in Parliament did "not to press too heavily upon the native race" Parata went on to note: "No doubt the Europeans say that the Maoris are still very ignorant, but in reply to that I would state that the Maoris are possessed of quite sufficient ability to bring forward beneficial measures. "

Not surprisingly, Parata did not convince the *Post's* editor who, when commenting on the letter, continued to write about the "burlesque of Maori representation" and maintained the position that Maori members merely provided "dummy votes" for the government. Therefore, Maori members such as Parata, continued to operate under the burden of being assumed by critics to be government patsies. This put them in a difficult position. If the Government brought forward measures they supported, the Maori members risked their support being seen as proof of their assumed allegiance. On the other hand, to vote against a measure just to make a point that they were independent also would not be a sensible position to adopt. For Maori members, whose aim was to quickly secure any measures that would assist Maori in a post-war environment, it was primarily the Government that could bring change. To consistently vote against the government just to demonstrate independence would risk alienating those who could actually get something done. This explains why Parata was often at pains to describe his own position as one of independence that might see him support the government at times, but also might see him oppose it at other times. On 22 September 1871 he particularly noted in the House: "I do not wish it to be thought by honorable members that we are supporting altogether the present Government". As he added, for Maori Members "All Governments are pretty much alike..."

Although the inherent racism of those opposing Maori representation is clear there is evidence as to why the matter of representation was particularly a sore issue at this time. This is revealed by the *Post's* discussion of the potential impact that the Maori members could have. Although, as noted previously, there were no true political parties in New Zealand at this time, and governments were formed by a coalition of interests coming together in the aftermath of an election, it appears that it was still pretty clear to political pundits as to various leanings among the Pakeha Parliamentarians in the House in 1871. According to the editor, at this time the numbers of 'government' members and 'opposition' members was "very nearly balanced". In this situation, then, the Maori members "virtually hold the balance of power". This was an intolerant situation to persons such as the *Post's* editor: "... that three men [sic], ignorant of our language and our laws, without the slightest smattering of political education or idea of the magnitude of the question that their votes may decide, should have, as it were, a British community in their

power, is unparalleled in the history of colonisation." This, then, was the world in which Parata and his colleagues had to operate in as a Parliamentarian.

Nevertheless, within the House of Representatives, Parata and the other Maori members sought to improve and extend Maori representation. The first area needing to be dealt with related to the way in which the effectiveness of Maori members was undermined by the failure of those within Parliament to ensure that they could communicate effectively. Attempts by Maori Members to get all legislation that was brought before the House translated into te reo were fruitless. It was even an issue that legislation that actually pertained to Maori be translated before it was debated let alone after the parliamentary Session was concluded. That this all may have been a surprise to Parata is suggested by the comments he had made in relation to Parliamentary debates as it appears that initially he had assumed that these would be translated. During the 27 April celebratory speech given after his election, Parata promised transparency: "One thing I shall propose in the House is to have everything that is said in the House published in Maori so that you may see what is doing there, and that you may know what I ask for." By November 1871, at the end of the Session, he recalled his assumption that all the speeches of Maori members at least would be translated but had learnt since that this was not the case. He complained that therefore Maori constituents had no way of knowing what their representatives had done in the House.

Another angle pursued by the Maori parliamentarians to improve Maori representation in the House was to ensure that those already elected to the House were represented in positions of influence rather than merely languishing as marginalised Members of Parliament. Parata supported the appointment of Maori members to House committees. In September 1871 he moved that Wiremu Katene be appointed as a Member of the Committee hearing Public Petitions. Parata's motion was approved on condition that Katene would only assist with petitions from Maori or about Maori issues,. The whole matter was further advanced by a later decision that a Native Affairs Select Committee be specifically formed of which Parata also became a member.

Another component of the Maori representation issue that was afoot when Parata entered Parliament was the appointment of a Maori representative to the Legislative Council. It appears that this was the least controversial component of the wide ranging call being made to extend Maori representation. When, on 15 September 1871, Takamoana brought a three-pronged motion to extend Maori representation, (that was, of course, supported by Parata), the proposal



to appoint a Maori representative to the Legislative Council ultimately gained majority support while increased Maori seats and appointing a Maori member on the Executive Council were not supported. Despite this resolution, the Government did not move quickly on the Legislative Council appointments during the session or between sessions leaving Parata to bring the matter up again in July 1872 and ask what progress had been made. In response Native Minister McLean confirmed the Government was committed to introduce the measure and would do so shortly. Presumably McLean moved slowly as, not surprisingly, there was a body of public opinion that was strongly against the move. This is shown when the matter was being discussed in 1872, and seemed likely to soon occur. At this time one newspaper quipped that rum and tobacco would have to be laid in while another wrote about the 'sacred chamber' of the Council being invaded by 'outer barbarians.' Nevertheless, by the end of 1872, two appointments were made.

A harder fought representation issue, however, was in relation to Maori members being appointed to the Executive Council and thereby effectively being included in the government. This then was the greater prize to advance Maori issues politically but it was also the one that bore the greatest risk for a Government to adopt. When a motion on this was brought forward in September 1871, the emphasis was that the role of any appointed Maori member of the Council would be to offer advice to the Native Minister presumably on Maori issues only. During the session of 1872, this matter would become a significant political football and Parata would be thrust into centre-stage over the actions he decided to take.

## **Parata reviews Support**

As indicated above, Parata must have completed his first session of Parliament with some level of frustration. In relation to one of his core instructions to make significant advances in addressing the matter of land confiscation he was forced to acknowledge that he had not been able to achieve any change. In addition, as Parata pointed out, the Fox Ministry had not really dealt with any matters that the Maori members had brought before it.

As the report indicates, Parata found himself having a pivotal role in the political turmoil that arose in Parliament in 1872 when on two occasions the Government changed. Although the full political context to these events was much broader than native policy, or Wi Parata, the makeup of the House meant that, with government and opposition factions fairly evenly matched, Parata and the other Maori members of Parliament found themselves holding the balance of power. When Parata spoke in the first broad debate on the Government's performance, he was somewhat ambivalent in his words. He generally complained that the Government had done little to address a range of Maori issues that Members had brought into the House, but subsequently also suggested that the Fox Ministry was "a Maori Government". It was just that they had done little to advance Maori aspirations. Parata was similarly ambivalent in his stated views about the Native Minister McLean. At the beginning of his speech, he specifically exempted McLean from the broad criticism he was levelling at the Government effectively saying that any good things about the Government and its relationship with Maori were due to McLean. Soon after, however, Parata then specifically accused McLean of not sufficiently attending to Native matters and claimed that the Minister more favoured European perspectives and interests. One of the most pointed criticisms that was aimed at McLean was Parata's call that any new Government that might come into place should not contain any members who could speak the Maori language. This statement was viewed as being most controversial drawing subsequent comment in the House and in the media. Considering its meaning, however, it appears that Parata, as part of his invocation to start a new native policy, did not want to deal with those who felt they knew and understood Maori - the self-proclaimed experts. He would rather look at things afresh, without the existence of pre-suppositions. Parata painted a big picture objective with two main components: for the government to put the matter of the War behind them and to start afresh by devising a whole new policy for Maori.

Parata's speech criticising the Fox Ministry was reported to have been met with a stony or maybe stunned silence. After the speech, one reporter ventured that Parata had "disgusted" the Fox Ministry by raising the opposition he had. Given this speech, not surprisingly Parata was among those who voted against the Fox Ministry in the subsequent 'no-confidence' vote. Two of the other Maori members did not. Despite record in the media that Maori members held the balance of power, they were split in exercising this. Nevertheless, the government was brought down by just three votes. A new ministry headed by Stafford came into power.

Stafford had actively courted the support of the Maori members. He had first made overtures during the debate in response to Parata's motion that a Commission of Inquiry be established to look into the issue of confiscated lands. Agreeing with the motion, Stafford took the opportunity to state his position that, if warranted by the findings of a Commission of Inquiry, the return of confiscated lands would "promote the peace of the country" more than any other measure. The return of lands, he said, would remove "one of the greatest sources of difficulty". To do so would be "an act of grace and an act of policy"

During the debate which led to the fall of the Fox Ministry, Stafford produced a long series of promises about what his government would do in relation to native policy. Essentially they were all the matters that Parata and other Maori members had brought forward in the previous session. Media reports show that the lobbying of Maori members by Stafford's party outside of the House was intense with promises, warnings, threats all being used to try and influence their decision. What the Maori members were going to do became the obsession of political pundits and participants for those short days where the fate of the Government hung in the balance.

Stafford was chosen to form a new government. Although nineteenth century ministries rose and fell with some regularity, for Parata and his supporters the bringing down of the Fox Ministry was seen as a significant victory that was attended by hope that a genuinely new future had arrived for Maori policy. The great dinner held in Wellington bore all the hallmarks of celebration and optimism. A degree of political naivety in relation to Pakeha politics is evident shown somewhat by Parata's letter which he sent out for wide distribution informing constituents of the likelihood that confiscated land now would be returned. Stafford may not have realised that, in having made such a comprehensive series of promises, he had raised expectations among

the Maori members, especially Parata, who clearly expected to see immediate action. When Stafford stalled and then backtracked on several matters, Parata began to review his support.

Several signs soon emerged that the Stafford Government might not have been all it promised to be. On forming his Ministry Stafford immediately named his Executive Council picks but he only stated his intention to appoint two Maori members. Considering there were only four members to choose from, and only two had voted for Stafford, it might be imagined that an immediate announcement would not have been difficult and that it would have been wise to have done this. Furthermore, merely days into the Ministry, in both the House and the Council, Government Ministers, when asked pointed questions about the policy over confiscated lands, prevaricated in their answers. Neither did they move quickly in response to Parata's call to remove pre-emption for the sale of Maori land, disestablish the office of the Native Reserves Commissioner or to pardon 'rebels' and return their lands. When, less than a month after taking office, Vogel forced a debate over a no confidence motion, the Stafford Ministry was brought down by a two vote majority. Again the Maori Members did not vote in unison. Despite this, it was Parata who was particularly identified in the media as one of those responsible for the fall of the Stafford Ministry due to a changing of their allegiance.

In the media Parata was portrayed as being self-seeking in his change of alliance. It was especially suggested that Stafford's refusal to announce or appoint the Maori Executive Council members frustrated Parata's expectation that he would be one of the appointees. Furthermore, it was suggested in the media that Parata's change of allegiance to another government was due to their promising his appointment which, following the establishment of the Vogel Ministry, did occur in December 1872. All this goes towards creating an impression of Parata acting in a calculated, self-serving and dishonourable fashion. As it appears that he was long remembered in the Pakeha mind for this action, it is important to consider this accusation. For a start, it would be ridiculous to suggest other than to acknowledge that Parata held some expectation that he would be one of the Maori members appointed to the Executive Council. It is a far different matter, however, to suggest that this was the entire reason for his changing allegiances in such a short time. Firstly, the appointment of Maori to the Executive Council was an action that had been long discussed and supported by all Maori members. Secondly, it had been promised by Stafford and should have been something quickly achieved if it was in fact Stafford's intention to do so. Thirdly, it is not correct to say that the wavering of Stafford and his Ministers over the Executive Council appointment was the sole issue behind Parata's loss of support. Instead, the

new Government had met every matter raised before it on native policy with a wait-and-see response. Parata later recorded that he had deliberately tested the new Ministry on a range of matters and their responses were unsatisfactory. This clearly was not the new dawn of Maori policy that Parata and others had expected and Stafford had promised.

Despite the issue not being as simple as it first appears, a fair amount of invective poured forth. Parata was said to be without political principles. He was accused of "unscrupulous and sudden ratting" and of not being "burdened with any superfluity of political honesty." He was described as an "unscrupulous place-hunter" and a "political Judas Iscariot" - a man who had turned politics into a "profitable business." When Parata's appointment to the Executive Council was confirmed, those making these accusations considered that they were proven in their opinions. Not mentioned at the time, was the fact that Parata had driven a hard bargain, only accepting the Cabinet position once McLean guaranteed him that the promises made by Stafford in respect of confiscated land would be fully honoured. As noted previously, before then McLean opposed Maori parliamentary requests associated with confiscated lands. Therefore, Parata promised his allegiance to those who offered to fulfil his political agenda which was also the agenda he had been charged with achieving by his constituents. Parata also later claimed that he was influenced in accepting the Executive Council appointment by a specific request from the Governor to fill the position.

It is to be remembered that the appointment of Maori members to the Executive Council was an objective uniformly sought by all Maori members. There is less recorded, however, in the sources examined for this report, as to why this objective was sought and what expectations were held. It would not be difficult to imagine that those within the Maori political world who supported this policy believed that by having Maori members of Parliament on the Executive Council, they finally had a seat at the table of power. They would be a part of Government and, in fact, a member of Cabinet. Some sources would later describe Parata, and his co-appointee Katene, as Ministers. If this was so, they were Ministers without portfolios.

Among the media, the recorded views on the appointment of Maori members to the Executive Council greatly varied in their level of support and in their presumptions on what the appointments might mean. One reporter described Parata as a man "of considerable intelligence, and possessed of liberal views upon all questions affecting the relations between the Maoris and the Europeans". Even those in support, however, probably viewed the matter differently to

Maori who had been arguing for this development to happen. Some in the media described the appointment as a “new experiment in governing the natives.” Some thought it would be "of great value to the colony and help largely to break down the barriers which have hitherto existed between the Government and the natives." Others, whilst acknowledging that Parata and Katene "possess quite sufficient independence of spirit to prevent them becoming mere appendages to the Cabinet", on the other hand assumed that the appointees would hold the same views as the new Government so "that there can be little doubt of perfect unanimity of action." Clearly, therefore, the new appointees were not expected to cause any trouble. The belief was also held that the appointed members would play the role of messengers of the Government who would effectively communicate Government policy and intentions to Maori. This would "soon have the effect of abating the delusive expectations of the Maoris." The role of Parata and Katene, and newly appointed Legislative Councillors Wi Tako and Mokena Kohere, were to "fairly and honestly place the policy of the Government before the Maori people, and obtain their acquiescence to it."

### **Parata as Government Member**

In the months after his appointment, Parata would soon encounter evidence that his decision was not well understood by his constituents. If the view held by Pakeha was that Parata's position on the Executive Council was simply to communicate Government policy to Maori and to gain support for it, it appears that this view similarly was held by Maori with whom Parata met in the early months of 1873. In bringing down the Stafford Ministry, Maori were reported as believing that Parata, (and Takamoana who voted the same way), were "traitors to the best interests of their race". This opinion probably arose because the expectations over the Stafford Government had been built up to the point that this Ministry had been seen as the way of the future to achieve Maori policy objectives.

When Parata engaged in a series of hui early in 1873 he would learn the views of those within his electorate. In making this tour, he was accompanying Donald McLean who was prepared to make some arrangements in relation to Taranaki confiscated lands. According to one newspaper that had long held a critical view of Parata, during this tour those who met with Parata saw him "as a mere dependent of Mr. McLean - an humble companion, whose duty it is to echo his master's wishes and do what he is told." The paper added "he is no longer an Israelite, but an

Egyptian". The paper claimed that Parata had become a pariah: "the Europeans do not want him, and the Maoris will not have him. Of what use then is he in the Cabinet?"

At Whanganui, the meeting discussed the return of land confiscated between the Waitotara and Waingongoro rivers. After Mclean had presented the details of the offer being made and proposed terms for the return of land, Parata took the opportunity to explain the events of the previous year in relation to the fall of the Stafford Ministry. According to media reports, Parata spoke of the "hollowness" of Stafford's promises and that it had been Parata who had tested these promises in the House. Parata claimed McLean's new policy and softening on confiscation issues as having resulted from he having frequently brought the subject before Parliament. From the report of the hui, it appears that Parata was taken at his word.

At Parihaka, Parata sought to try the same approach. While acknowledging that all confiscated land was not being returned, at least some of it was which Parata claimed was a result of his efforts. As he had at Whanganui, Parata advised those gathered that the best path forward in the future was to adhere to and adopt Pakeha law. When Te Whiti engaged with Parata, he sought to set him straight on some matters. He suggested that Parata had not come to Parihaka as a Maori and that his words were not words of a Maori but of the Europeans. Whereas Te Whiti welcomed the words of peace, he was doubtful whether Parata had the experience and sufficient credentials noting: "It is not right for a new born child to make arrangements." Te Whiti later made the distinction between he and his people and Parata and Wi Tako: "A bush pig does not herd with tame pigs." When further speaking, Te Whiti again supported the words of peace, but noted that Parata spoke the words of Parliament which, for Te Whiti, had little power to achieve change: "I think that I am the man in whose hands it rests to make peace."

After Parihaka, when a series of meetings were held in New Plymouth with various iwi and hapu of Taranaki, Parata resumed his role of supporting McLean, calling upon those gathered to accept Government offers over land and urging that in the future the law be upheld. Having recovered from the confronting words of Te Whiti to again return to script, Parata then fell foul of Pakeha opinion as a result of his hui at Waikato. The newspaper reports are somewhat vague in quoting exactly what Parata said. On its face, it all seemed innocuous enough with Parata simply advising Waikato Maori to continue to submit their claims for the return of confiscated land. No doubt he did so within the context of his overall experience in Taranaki where he had brought the subject up consistently until some movement in government policy had resulted.

Even McLean later characterised Parata's comments as merely being to urge kingitanga to bring grievances forward rather than to harbour them in secret. Nevertheless, Parata's words were soon pounced upon by the media as being highly inappropriate especially as they had been made by a member of the Executive. Parata was portrayed as urging the kingitanga to continue in their resistance in order to regain the confiscated lands. The heightened fear was that this resistance may not just be passive. As these words were made in the presence of the Governor and the Defence Minister, they might be taken by those gathered as being Government policy. As Parata was viewed as a member of Government, and was seen to have urged policy that different from the main platform of government policy regarding Waikato, his resignation was called for. Thereafter, media reported that Parata was ostracised by his Cabinet colleagues and that McLean would not share any information with him. At a later date, Parata acknowledged that he had not even seen the 1875 Confiscated Lands Administration Bill, which would place confiscated lands under ordinary administration as wastelands of the provinces.

Over the next three years, through until the election of 1876, Wi Parata remained a member of the Executive. With Parata, it is difficult to assess the impact of his work within Government as the source material available to this project records little of Parata's actions from 1873 to 1875. Sources consulted for this report reveal comparatively little of what Parata did in his role, how he interacted with others, what he achieved or did not achieve. McLean's answers to questions in the House in 1873 show that Parata and Katene did not attend all meetings of the Executive Council, only those they were called for. Other than that we know very little from the sources examined for this report. As a result of his less evident public political presence, Parata was not a figure that came to the attention of the media and there is much less reported about him or opinion given on him. Parata has been accused by biographers of saying less in Parliament over this period and that anything said was usually in support of Government policy. Generally this is correct but it should not necessarily be used as a criticism of Parata. Today, the concept of collective responsibility within Cabinet is well understood - the constitutional convention that once decisions were made within Cabinet all members of Cabinet must be seen to publicly support that decision. Although it can not be guessed at as to whether collective cabinet responsibility was a convention as early as the 1870s, some measure of the concept is likely to have operated. If Parata wished to have any influence at the seat of Government, he could not publicly remain a critic. The public response to the comments he made at the 1873 Waikato hui demonstrated this clearly.



In Parliament Parata publicly recorded his support of the Government policy including Native Reserves administration policy and new proposed legislation for the Land Court. Acknowledging his former opposition on both of these issues, Parata emphasised the innovations that had been included in the new legislation. When Parata did raise opposition to Government measures, such as the Floatage of Timber Bill, he was clear to note that he was doing so not as a member of the Executive “but simply as a member representing a Maori electoral district”. This occurred, however, on a few occasions only. Usually, Parata was at pains to record that he was not in opposition to the Government. During the debate on the 1875 Confiscated Lands Administration Bill, Parata felt the need to explain that in making complaints about the Bill he was not standing in opposition to the Government “but merely on this word alone”.

The position in which Parata was placed steadily eroded his electorate support over the three years he was part of the Government. It was the 1876 election that brought Parata back into the media spotlight. Early in 1875, comment emerged that Maori opinion towards Parata was less than supportive. The newspaper of the Hawkes Bay Repudiation Movement published an article critical of most of the current Maori Members and especially critical of the two Executive Council Members citing their 'profound obedience' in voting with the Government. In the period before the 1876 election, during the campaign and in the aftermath of Parata's defeat, there are a number of examples of published articles that not only do not support Parata, but berate him with impassioned phrases calling him "a very obsequious personage", "traitor" and "utterly unfit to be in Parliament" while he and Katene together were labelled as "persecutors of their people" and "murderers to the Maori constituents". While the bulk of the comment is politically motivated, coming from the Hawkes Bay repudiationist movement, as well as long-standing critics such as the *Evening Post*, published comments from a wide variety of districts gives credence to the impression that, by the time he left office, Parata was not in any way viewed in a positive light for his political career. The main criticism was that he had joined the Government and, as a result, had fallen silent from his former role as a impartial critic of policies that impacted on Maori. The one article that strongly defended Parata (and fellow Executive Council member Katene) correctly pointed out that the appointment of Maori parliamentarians to Council had been widely supported and that the criticism raised against Parata was only general in nature and not specific to any actual event or policy failure.

Nevertheless, what seems to be the main point at issue was that Parata's constituents felt that after 1873, despite the Executive Council appointments, nothing changed in the way that the

Government did its business as far as native issues were concerned. Therefore it appears that aside from the overt commentary, it was really Parata's apparent inability to bring about change from within that was the real source of the fierce criticism that was sent his way. Rather than any overt action that could be pointed to, it was his ineffectiveness within Government that caused offence. Parata and Katene, then, were the first, of a long line of Maori politicians right through to recent times who had to weigh seriously the offer to join the ranks of government; who do so under the belief that they could effect change from within and who ultimately find either they are unable to make significant changes or find that those changes made are not sufficiently known of, understood or regarded as being of sufficient magnitude to warrant ongoing broad support.

### **Post-Parliamentary Career**

Overall, this report has not been able to undertake the research necessary to make a full evaluation of whether Parata was successful as a parliamentarian. Certainly, Parata is seen as having clear ideals and objectives which he presented as soon as he entered the debating chamber of the House. It appears, however, that it was his desire to see real changes and his frustration that Maori members held little leverage over a Pakeha Parliament that led him to gamble on achieving his objectives by joining in with the Government rather than standing aside. The result ultimately was that he could not effect enough change to ward off criticism that he had sold out. Ironically, Parata's commitment to being involved with and fighting for Maori issues would be shown over his post-Parliamentary life. His exit from Parliament was the beginning of a thirty-year period where Parata would be closely involved in a range of key issues that were confronting Maori through to the turn of the century.

One principle in which Parata strongly believed was that Maori should have complete control and decisionmaking regarding their own lands. This was first seen in Parliament when, on 22 September 1871, Parata proposed that all government funding for Maori be "struck out", but that in return "let all our lands be given back to us to be managed solely by us." One of the land issues on which Parata focused was to gain the return of educational trust land. This report has only briefly referred to the famous case in which Wi Parata was involved over educational trust land at Whitireia due to the limited scope of this project and the fact that whole works of analysis have already considered the matter in depth. Where this report has sought to contribute is by showing that the issue of the educational trust land was an important one for Parata. He

was associated both with land at Porirua and Otaki that had been given by Maori during the 1850s to churches for the purposes of building and running schools. Prior to the litigation brought by Parata, he had often engaged in debates in Parliament over educational trust land noting that this land should either been utilised for the purpose for which it was gifted or returned to those who had originally made the gift. After the 1877 case, Parata remained an activist in relation to the matter of educational trust land, the issue of which blew up again in the late 1890s and through into the early twentieth century when there appeared to be more political will from the government of the time to get involved and deal with the various issues relating to this complex matter. Parata remained involved in some way in the new discussions, law cases and government statements on policy.

In the years after his time in Parliament, Parata would have an ongoing association with matters relating to the impacts of the confiscation of Taranaki land. The most significant aspect of this would be his relationship with the Parihaka community and its dynamic leader Te Whiti.

As indicated previously, the recorded visit of Parata to Parihaka in 1873 was somewhat confrontational with Te Whiti chiding the young parliamentarian for his inexperience, his Pakeha thinking and his association with the Government. Within five years, and free from the confines of Parliament, Parata was free to sing the praises of Te Whiti and Tohu of Parihaka. In his August 1878 letter published in the newspapers, Parata argued the point that the only reason peace had come about and prevailed up to that time was due to the influence of Te Whiti and Tohu who had prevented the spilling of any more blood in the aftermath of the war: "It was through these men that the sun came from under the earth"

The nature of Parata's relationship with Parihaka before 1878 is not clear from the source material considered for this report, but evidence after this date demonstrates a close connection. Parata regularly travelled to Parihaka with his family to attend hui. By July 1879, amidst reports of the first arrests of Te Whiti's ploughmen came word that his son Winara was among those taken prisoner. When interviewed for comment, Parata would not criticise the supposedly illegal actions of his son noting instead that he and the others were engaged in a legitimate form of protest. Nevertheless, despite this public display of support, Parata may have had private reservations as he sent messages north suggesting that the ploughing and the arrests had made the necessary point and that further action possibly should be suspended. Te Whiti and other leaders had other ideas. The ploughing and the arrests continued.

For Parata, it was sometimes a difficult task to work out how best to serve Te Whiti's objectives as the prophet often had an unexpected perspective on matters. When the first ploughmen were arrested, Parata engaged a lawyer and raised funds to mount a legal defence. The intention was to use the defence of the ploughmen to test the validity of the laws under which Taranaki land had been confiscated. A Committee formed to lobby in Wellington for this court action included all of the Maori members of Parliament. While the legal case was being pursued, Parata and the Committee thought it wise that no further protest action occur. Parata journeyed to meet Te Whiti and gain his agreement. Probably to his great surprise, Te Whiti rejected the request to suspend protest, rejected the actions taken by the Committee and rejected the proposition of getting up a test case with Te Whiti reportedly saying: "There were only two authorities in the Islands - the Governor and Te Whiti - and they must settle the dispute, not the Law Courts."

During the Parihaka troubles, several newspapers impugned the actions of Wi Parata. One correspondent, while praising Te Whiti as having honourable intentions in his actions, felt that Parata maintained his involvement as counsel to Te Whiti simply to gain land in the Urenui or access to the cash raised as a legal fighting fund: "The difference between Te Whiti and Wi Parata is, that the former is a patriot, and the latter a selfish schemer, who wishes to profit personally by the storm Te Whiti has raised."

Despite these accusations, Parata showed, through his ongoing action, that he was committed to Te Whiti's cause. It appears that around 1880, Parata intensified his association with Parihaka. He frequently is reported as a visitor and in October his whanau was reported as having moved there. And of course Parata's daughter had married Te Whiti's son. By 1881, the media had identified that Parata was Te Whiti's political adviser, although they acknowledged that this went only as far as the prophet allowed. As part of his role, Parata appears to have been Te Whiti's press secretary, explaining to the outside world what Te Whiti was about and answering various negative perceptions about the objectives of the prophet.

Despite possibly having improved his standing as an advisor to Te Whiti, Parata found himself again to be out of step with the prophet after the invasion of Parihaka by colonial troops. In response to the arrest of Te Whiti and others, Wi Parata took steps that he assumed would be necessary. As before, he sought to engage legal counsel, raise funds for a defence and lobby Parliament in relation to bringing on a speedy trial only to find, when he visited Te Whiti in jail,

that the prophet had a different game plan in mind. Te Whiti was held without trial until 1883, when he then returned to Parihaka. Throughout the 1880s, Parata was reported as being a “constant visitor” to Parihaka.

During the 1890s, one of the key roles performed by Parata within the national political scene was his ability to provide commentary on the various legislative proposals brought forward by Government in relation to confiscated lands and the general management of Maori land. He led the opposition to the Native Land Settlement Bill which aimed to end private purchasing and create a Board to administer Maori land. Parata maintained his opposition to the Native Land Court observing at one time that Maori had initially considered the Court would be beneficial before over time realising how their lands would be affected. Parata's remarks to the Governor in 1893 when he visited Waikanae emphasised the unfairness of existing native land laws. Nevertheless, remaining optimistic, Parata told the Governor: “If more harmonious laws were introduced, then there would be peace and happiness amongst the two races.”

Over the 1890s, Parata came to be closely associated with national unity movements that were growing among Maori. Parata later told Cadman that there “...was a movement amongst the Maoris to unite both Islands in the formation of a Native Parliament to manage native affairs...” assuring him that “ ...this was not done in any spirit of hostility to the existing law”. In 1893 Parata intensified his involvement with the Maori parliamentary movement. Parata was among the deputation of seven representatives appointed to meet the Native Minister Cadman supporting a petition signed by over 20,000 persons and presenting draft legislation aimed at abolishing the Land Court and creating a Maori Parliament. The deputation sought these actions under the Treaty of Waitangi and within the 1852 Constitution Act.

Possibly Parata had really believed that such a well supported and comprehensive effort might have achieved its objectives. Certainly, by the time a reporter visited Waikanae in 1896, the optimism Parata had expressed to the Governor a few years earlier had been replaced with a smouldering resentment, the visitor recording that Parata was “full of bitter animosities as regards the pakeha, whom he once loved”. Parata referred to the duplicity of Pakeha: "how can any true Maori with all the natural love of his native land in him feel good will to the pakeha who is always cheating, swindling, and robbing him of his patrimony"

Parata did not give up trying however. When another Governor and Premier Richard Seddon visited Otaki, ostensibly to open a local hospital. Parata berated them with a speech calling for the stoppage of land sales and the abolition of the Court after which, according to Parata. the Government should leave the land to Maori to consider what should happen next.

The 35-year public and political career of Wiremu Te Kakakura Parata ended with his death in 1906. Throughout this time, Parata had remained intensely engaged in a range of regional and national issues that were of significance during the latter part of the 19th century as key touchstones in the relationship between Maori and the Crown. For his efforts, Parata often endured sustained criticism from Pakeha politicians and the media. In Parliament, having made a strategic but risky decision on a way forward to advance various issues, he could not retain the support of those he was seeking to represent. Nevertheless, his true commitment to work to advance those issues which he held as being important is shown in his continuous efforts after his Parliamentary career ended. Through the roles he adopted, and the acknowledged position he held at Parihaka and in the Maori parliamentary movement, Wi Parata is clearly a significant statesman of the late 19th century.

## **APPENDIX I: ADDITIONAL NGARARA ARTICLES**

While undertaking newspaper research on the public and political life of Wi Parata, a few additional articles have been located in relation to the issue of the settling of title for the Ngarara Block which was a major part of my report "Ngatiawa: land and political engagement issues c.1819-1900" [WAI A194] These articles very much go to the heart of some of the issues that were raised when I presented evidence on this report in August 2018. For the information of the Tribunal, I present these articles in full.

### **1889: Inia Tuhata's Perspective**

My report covered in detail the dispute between owners of the Ngarara block that especially arose during the 1880s and culminated in the partition of the block in 1887. Although there were several disputes between various claimants, a central conflict was between Inia Tuhata and Wi Parata. Dissatisfied with the results of the partition, Inia Tuhata and others petitioned Parliament, and, after investigation by a commission of inquiry, won the right for a rehearing which took place in 1890. In the midst of this, Wi Parata came into conflict with the Otaki Roads Board which had commissioned a surveyor to lay a road through the Ngarara Block. Parata pulled up survey pegs resulting in a Court case for damages being brought by the surveyor.<sup>403</sup> Within the context of these events, Inia Tuhata wrote a letter to the editor criticising Parata over his actions regarding the road but also more generally over the Ngarara block. In the letter he recorded his perspective on evidence that supported his family's claims to the block and challenged Parata's claims to certain land in the block. To my recollection, evidence with these details is not recorded in my report. It does not change any of my findings, but adds additional specific information on how Inia Tuhata regarded his dispute with Parata. The letter, reproduced below, was dated 9 January 1889 and was published in the *Evening Post* [p.4]

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<sup>403</sup> See 22 December 1888, *Evening Post*. From progress of the case and its appeal, see in the same newspaper articles dated 10 January 1889, 31 January 1889, 18 September 1889, 19 September 1889.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR—I am glad to see that the Government are going to take steps to vindicate their rights in our cause against Wi Parata for the obstructing of the laying off a road and for pulling up the pegs. In the first place, near where the pegs were pulled up, an open track has been in existence over fifty years. In the second place, the ground where Wi Parata now lives and has his houses erected does not belong to him. That portion of the land in 1826 belonged to Pomare and family. Two or three years after that Pomare handed it over to William King and his brother and family. In 1848 William King, his brother Enoka 'Tatairau and family, and others left the land for good, and went to Taranaki. In 1860 Enoka 'Tatairau returned from Taranaki to Waikanae. Seeing the widow of Pomare had arrived from Chatham Island, Enoka made a speech about handing the most of their land over to her, which she accepted and occupied—the remainder was handed over to Kaahe te Rauoterangi, the wife of Jock Nicol, known as Scotch Jock—which I hold letters proving the gift from Tatairau to her. My reason for writing this is to let it be known, that he may not deny having blocked the road, and placed gates across and padlocked them. Also, it is my wish that an open road may be made, not only for myself, but for all the natives and people, some of whom will not open their mouths, being afraid of Wi Parata, they being ignorant of the law.

I am, &c.,

INIA TUHATA.

Waikanae, 7th January, 1889.

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## 1891: Court Costs

One issue that arose during the August hearing related to the likely costs associated with the post-1887 fallout from the partitioning on the Ngarara block. The question arose whether the costs associated with the Commission investigations and the rehearing may have played any role in the subsequent sales of sections from the Ngarara block during the 1890s.

The 1889 Ngarara Commissioners recorded their awareness that there were ‘considerable’ costs associated with prosecution of the various investigations and that there would be further costs as a result of the recommended rehearing. [A194, p.496] In addition the report recorded an example where one owner selling land had expended 42% of the value of her interests to gain a title to them. There is also a recorded that Wi Parata had to pay a total of £600 in costs. [A194, pp.573-4 & 623]

Two newspaper articles have been located that provide further information on costs. The first is an article dated 23 March 1891 that comes from the *New Zealand Herald*. [p.5]

### **THE NGARARA BLOCK.**

**The Judges (Messrs. Mair and Scannell), announced this morning that they would on Monday apportion the shares to the different claimants in the Ngarara Block. I learn from a good source that judgment is likely to be very disappointing to Wi Parata, who before these proceedings held the bulk of the block (I believe 40,000 acres). The claims of the two infants whose friends, by petitioning Parliament, brought about the rehearing, will get 1500 acres instead of four acres. The law costs will be little short of £5000.**

[NB: Use of the Reserve Bank Inflation Calculator records that £5000 in 1891 is worth the equivalent of \$1,022,663.41 today.]

A further article recorded one cost faced by Wi Parata between 1887 and 1890 - the utilisation of the services of Henry Field. This article appeared in the *New Zealand Times* on 28 April 1894. [p.2]

The Chief Justice was engaged yesterday in hearing an action brought by Henry Augustus Field, authorised surveyor and licensed Native interpreter, of Otaihanga, to recover a sum of £466 8s 7d from Wi Parata te Kakakura, Native chief, of Wai-kanae, in respect of services alleged to have been rendered as surveyor and interpreter between May, 1887, and December, 1890. The defendant denied that the plaintiff, within the dates specified, was qualified to act as a licensed Native interpreter within the meaning of the Native Land Court Act, 1886, and denied also that he had rendered the services alleged, or that defendant had requested him to perform any such work. Mr Stafford and Mr H. Hall appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr Hadfield for the defendant. The plaintiff and Mr C. B. Morison were examined, and the case was adjourned to the 24th May.

[NB: Use of the Reserve Bank Inflation Calculator records that £466 in 1894 is worth the equivalent of \$90,879.10 today.]