

Ma tātua
or others
&
Chesson
or others

The Whero & 3
other MHRs to
Chesson, 16 July 83

Probably enclosed
with C14/111

J McBeth - Chesson
17 July 1883

NZ

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F. W. Chesson Esq. }
Secretary, "Aborigines'
Protection Society" }

Dear Sir,

These are the words of us, the four members of the Maori race representing the entire Maori people in the New Zealand Parliament to you; and not only our own words but those of the tribes we represent, whom we have consulted on this subject.

We have heard of your exertions in a distant land to bring our wrongs under the notice of the Queen and Parliament, from whom, only, we can now hope for aid against oppression and help to preserve our race from a decay that has already made rapid advance among us, and which now threatens to sweep us entirely from the land of our fathers.— But first we wish to thank you and numerous other friends who have taken up our cause, not only those whose words are great in the land, but all, no matter how humble.

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who after having heard of our troubles have said - "These Maoris are brothers. Let this evil be enquired into"; for we know that a word spoken in a cottage may overturn the palace of the King.

We believe it is known to you that years ago many of the Maories finding that the hand of Death was strong among them near the European settlements, where the evil that came with the Whites was more powerful to us than the good, retired into the interior of our Land and uniting many tribes into one people determined to live in the undisturbed possession of a portion of our Land, within certain bounds, beyond which we hoped that the destroyer would be unable to advance. - It would take many words to tell you how this proceeding of ours led to war with the colonial Government.

Let it suffice that we were driven into a small country on the West of Taupo where many of us have remained until lately undisturbed. But now the

Government proposes to open this retreat to all that we have striven to preserve it from, and, unless we receive prompt aid, we are afraid that it will be taken

from us, although the bond that we made with the Queen at Waitangi gives us to, not only this small piece of country but the whole of our lands. Our white friends however tell us that we must not obstruct the progress of colonization, and it is not our wish to do this. We merely desire to get the control of our lands into the hands of an elective body of Maories.

At present our lands are dealt with by the Native Land Courts which are presided over by judges appointed by Government to decide questions of Native title. The decisions of these judges are often very unjust. Tribal lands are often declared to be the property of individual maories. The land is often years going through the Court. Maories who have no right to land often have it awarded to them through false swearing. European lawyers are allowed to practise in the courts, and they and numerous officials usually swallow up the proceeds from the sale of the land.

We have always admitted the suzerainty of the Queen. Our protest is against the breaking of the Bond of

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Waitangi by the Colonial Government,
which being a party to a suit in the question
of lands acts also as the judge. We
do not object to being subject to any
laws made by the New Zealand Government
that do not overstep the bounds of our
bond with the Queen. We desire that
the Native courts should be done away
with and the land vested in an elective
body of Maories, who would be better
able to decide questions of title than
European judges. We desire also that
this Court should have power to make
roads through the territory which we
wish to reserve, raise taxation for this
purpose, and pass laws for Maori guidance,
subject to the approval of the Governor.

If we can obtain this we intend
to lease all our lands except that small
portion which we wish to remain in
undisturbed possession of free from
the evils that destroy us.

Every year laws are made taking
the control of land more out of our hands,
and vested ^{it} in the ~~Native~~ Minister for
Native Affairs, and our voices being
but four are powerless against eighty seven
representing the European portion of the

population in the New Zealand Parliament.
 With regard to the railway,
 we will be compelled to obstruct its
 progress until the question of land
 is settled, as we did the survey at
 Waitara, not with any desire to cause
 the shedding of blood, but because it is
 the only method we now have of offering
 resistance.

It is the intention of Tawhiao,
 whom we recognize as the head of our
 race, to visit your end of the world
 shortly for the purpose of petitioning
 Her Majesty on these things. In the
 meantime we make them known to you
 in the hope that a knowledge of our desires
 may assist you, and the Society that
 has so often made its influence felt for
 good in remote places, to continue the
 aid that has been so kindly extended
 to the people for whom we sign

Hoi ano

Na Matau

Na Nihi Whero M. H. R.

Hone Moki Tawhai M. H. R.

Henare Tomoana M. H. R.

H. H. Taiaroa M. H. R. Otago Heads

Parliamentary Buildings
 Wellington N.Z.
 16th July 1883