‘One Māori vote has defeated the Ministry’. Hēnare Tomoana and Sir George Grey’s Government 1879

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Abstract:

This article makes the case that Hēnare Tomoana (Member of the House of Representatives ‘MHR’ Eastern Māori: 1879-1884) needs to be properly acknowledged for bringing down Sir George Grey’s government in October 1879. That vote of no-confidence just squeaked through in the House with a result of 43 to 41 votes and Tomoana was the absolute key vote in sealing Grey’s downfall. Modern histories have largely given the credit to European MPs who forced Grey from office. Even when preeminent scholars are clearly wrong. And this is despite historians from the nineteenth century clearly mentioning Tomoana in their texts. This article uses newspapers at the time that clearly recognise Henare Tomoana as an important vote in allowing John Hall to become the new premier. It also uses John Hall’s archives to show how Hall and his supporters manipulated Tomoana for his vote. Those archives also show how quickly they backtracked on all their promises once Hall had become premier.

Key words: *George Grey, Hēnare Tomoana, John Hall, New Zealand Elections 1879, Taranaki Māori prisoners*.

Māori scholars have written about contested histories when it comes to Māori subject matters. This was a common theme by Māori historians in the 2015 special issue of the *New Zealand Journal of History*. Māori events or Māori people have often not been given their due place within New Zealand's national story. Instead, non-Māori persons or events have featured prominently in past histories because those are preferred narratives by New Zealand historians or social commentators. Mahuika mentioned 'For Māori, this Pākehā-centric history of Aotearoa has done more than merely silence or subsume it effectively pushed Māori to the margins of the national narrative…" (Mahuika, 2015, p.5). Kidman and O'Malley have noted other writers such as Lowenthal (1999) and Beiner (2018) have rasied concerns that we make 'a conscious decision not to speak of particular events, a 'disinclination to remember' or a particular 'art of forgetting' – a process involving the 'deliberate, purposeful, and regulated' judgement about what, at a collective level, a nation, society or group wishes 'to keep, and what to let go, to salvage or to shred or shelve' (Kidman and O'Malley, 2022, p.9). This article makes the case that Hēnare Tomoana (Member of the House of Representatives 'MHR' Eastern Māori: 1879-1884) needs to be properly acknowledged for bringing down Sir George Grey's government in October 1879. The colonial legislature (established in 1853) comprised an upper chamber known as the Legislative Council (which had appointees) and largely reviewed legislation. The lower chamber was the House of Representatives (elected members). However, the main parliamentary business was conducted in the House, and almost all premiers were appointed from the House. Specific Māori representation was effectively confined to four Māori seats under the Māori Representation Act 1867. Hēnare Tomoana was one of the Māori MPs. And with a closely divided House, Māori MPs' votes were critical to the survival of governments. The vote of no-confidence in Grey's government just squeaked through in the House with a result of 43 to 41 votes and Tomoana was the key vote in sealing Grey's downfall (New Zealand Parliament, 1879e). If there was a tie of 42-42 votes, the speaker of the House of Representatives, Sir Maurice O'Rorke (MHR Onehunga), would have by convention voted to confirm Grey as Premier and thus guaranteed his ministry's survival. The speaker had done exactly that for Grey in 1877 (New Zealand Parliament, 1877b).

McDowell in highlighting the career of the Māori MP, Matiu Rata, has made a highly significant comment that is relevant for this article on Hēnare Tomoana; 'Rata is just one of a lineage of Māori parliamentarians spanning 147 years, whose important contributions to the social, cultural and political landscape of New Zealand have been forgotten' (McDowell, 2015, p,121). Henare Tomoana's role in the fall of George Grey's Ministry (1877-1879) to date has been marginalised or simply erased. Others have been given more prominent roles in bringing about the downfall of Grey. And yet the newspapers in late September and early October 1879, liberally mention Henare Tomoana's significance in whether to support Grey's government or side with the opposition led by John Hall (MHR Selwyn). This article therefore has a few purposes. It serves to primarily argue that Tomoana was the critical vote that brought down Grey's

government. It also serves to highlight the manipulation that politicians were willing to exercise upon Māori colleagues for their own benefit. This article is therefore an example of remembering. It is to remember that Hēnare Tomoana must be given his proper place within New Zealand's political history pertaining to Grey's government in the late 1870s. And it is to remember that Māori politicians can be subject to manipulation.

Hēnare Tomoana: The man

Hēnare Tomoana was of both Ngāti Te Whatu-i-āpiti and Ngāti Kahungunu.[1] In the 1850s, Tōmoana along with his father and brothers were signatories to major Māori land purchasers by the Crown notably the sales of Ahuriri, Waipukurau, and Matau-a-Māui (Cape Kidnappers).

By the 1870s, Tomoana sided with the repudiation movement in the Wairarapa that wished to negate several former Māori land sales. After his terms as the Eastern Māori MP 1879-1884, Tomoana became an informal Māori advisor to the liberal party leaders John Ballance and Richard Seddon. As a result of his good relationship with Premier Richard Seddon, Tomoana was appointed to the Legislative Council in the late 1890s, and he served in that body until his death in 1904. He is buried at Waipatu near Hastings. Tomoana though was also heavily involved with Māori independent movements through the Kōtahitanga Parliaments in the 1890s (Ballara, 1993). His name appears in Parliamentary papers before and after his term as MP with various dispatches regarding Te Kooti (New Zealand Parliament, 1869), land disputes (New Zealand Parliament, 1880b), land legislation (New Zealand Parliament, 1893) and Commissions of Inquiry (New Zealand Parliament, 1873; New Zealand Parliament, 1891).

Hēnare Tomoana: The Parliamentarian

Hēnare Tomoana became MP for Eastern Māori in the by-election of July 1879 ("Māori Election for the East Coast District", 1879). He was elected to replace his older brother Karaitiana Takamoana who had died on 24 February 1879. Takamoana had been an avid supporter of Grey since he had helped Takamoana successfully defeat an electoral petition for his removal from Parliament by Sir Donald McLean's supporters in 1876 (New Zealand Parliament, 1876). Tomoana entered Parliament right into the thicket of the political scrap between the supporters of Grey's government and the opposition forces whose prominent members included former premier William Fox (MHR Wanganui) and Frederick Whitaker (MHR Waikato). Grey had gotten the better of his opponents ever since he won his seat of Auckland West in a by-election of March 1875.

On 9 October 1877, the premier at the time, Harry Atkinson (MHR Egmont), tended his resignation to the Governor. He had lost a vote of no-confidence the previous day (New Zealand Parliament, 1877a). The parliament at that point was in disarray. But on 12 October, the newspapers boldly announced the selection of Sir George Grey as premier

("Parliamentary", 1877). Certainly, no one expected that the next premier would be the volatile Grey (Bassett, 1975). Bohan described him accordingly: 'Sir George Grey, elderly and unstable, his mind tormented by nightmares of conspiracies, yet with charm and charisma undimmed by years and opium' (Bohan, 1994). The economic situation in New Zealand took a dramatic downturn during Grey's first year as Premier. Grey was then under extreme pressure to sell Māori land that it had in its possession from the confiscations during the New Zealand wars of the 1860s (Bassett, 1975, pp.45-58; Dalziel, 1986, p.22; McIvor, 1989, p.86). Political discussion regarding Māori was constantly dominated land issues. As examples there were issues regarding confiscated land in the Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Taranaki (Thom, 2022). There was land loss caused by the Native Land Court (Williams, 1999) and in the South Island, Ngāi Tahu wanted their reserves as promised from the great land sales between 1844-1864 (Waitangi Tribunal, 1991). And Ngāti Maru stopping road construction in the Thames area severely tested Hoani Nahe's (MHR Western Māori) support for Grey's government (Monin, 2001, pp.247-251).

As a colonial governor Grey had marshalled considerable power during his first tenure of 1845-1853. But once a colonial legislature came into operation in 1853, parliamentary politics, involved a different set of political skills where power was extremely fluid, and interpersonal relationships were paramount. Grey's relationships with the four Māori MPs at the beginning of his premiership was tested in the first vote of no-confidence in the House on 6 November 1877. In that vote, Karaitiana Takamoana (MHR, Eastern Māori), Hori Keri Taiaroa (MHR, Southern Māori) and Hoani Nahe (MHR, Western Māori) voted for Grey. Hori Tāwhiti (MHR, Northern Māori) voted with the opposition (New Zealand Parliament, 1877b). These relationships at the personal level should never be underestimated but through the passage of time these are increasingly difficult to explain with certainty. Grey's relationship for example with Hori Karaka Tāwhiti (MHR, Northern Māori) was always strained. As early as 1876, Tāwhiti was subjected to criticism from his own iwi, Ngāpuhi, who did not appreciate his antagonisms toward Grey in the House ("Hori Karaka Tawiti", 1876; "An Explanation", 1876). The three votes cast by the supporting Māori MPs were instrumental in Grey's survival. However, it would be 18 months before Grey's government would be subjected to another vote of confidence in July 1879. At this point the Māori MPs would be split over highly controversial Māori land issues and the newly elected MP Hēnare Tomoana's vote would then be put to the test.

Māori land issues Waikato and Taranaki

The major Māori land issues that affecting Grey's government that would be instrumental in Hēnare Tomoana's vote against Grey were particular to lands in the Waikato and Taranaki. There was constant pressure on Grey by Auckland business interests to get Māori land. R.C.J. Stone referred to this as a 'Māori lands lobby, powerful outside and inside the Assembly' (Stone, 1967, p.57). When Grey had become premier in 1877, he had begun a process of reconciliation with the Māori king, Tāwhiao. However,

Grey's meetings with him came to a stalemate in the late 1870s (Belgrave, 2017). And consequently, the political pressure to sell confiscated Taranaki lands had become even greater. The background to the Taranaki Māori lands issues lay with certain promises made by the deceased former Native Affairs Minister Donald McLean in the early 1870s. He had agreed to return lands back to Taranaki Rangatira (chiefs), Titokowaru, Te Whiti and Tohu. McLean had also started to take steps towards reconciliation with Taranaki Māori until his untimely death in 1877 (Fargher, 2007, pp.308-309). Eventually, the West Coast Commission confirmed that land was to be returned to Taranaki (New Zealand Parliament, 1880a, p.6).

When Taranaki Māori around their home of Parihaka constantly resisted the encroachment onto their lands, they were arrested. The protest-tactic used by them at the time was to begin ploughing Taranaki lands. In June 1879 armed constabulary began arresting the Māori ploughmen, only for the ploughmen to be replaced, and then replaced further, and replaced yet again at subsequent intervals in the fields (Scott, 1975, pp.55-60). The jails in Taranaki were eventually filled to capacity, and Wellington jails also had to be used. Eventually harsh penalties awaited many of those arrested Māori ploughmen despite their lawful rights being violated. Nearly 100 were sent to Dunedin sentenced to 12 months imprisonment (Sole, 2005, pp.372 & 382).

This political storm began to be of real concern for Hēnare Tomoana during his efforts to get elected to the Eastern Māori seat from February to the July 1879. Hoani Nahe (MHR Western Māori), a nominal Minister in Grey's administration visited many of the Taranaki prisoners in the Wellington jail on 25 July 1879. He was accompanied by Wi Parata (former MHR Western Māori (1871-1876), and a prominent Pākehā lawyer, Walter Buller. Nahe, Parata and Buller were not impressed with the state of the Taranaki prisoners in jail ("Government Officials and the Maori Prisoners", 1879). The Taranaki Māori lands issue had become so controversial, that Nahe decided to not seek re-election as an MP ("The Elections", 1879). Throughout 1879, the other Māori MPs were equally concerned with the Taranaki prisoners. In June 1879, Hori Tāwhiti (MHR Northern Māori) along with other rangatira from Ngāpuhi and Te Rarawa gave an address in Auckland, where they called for a measured response and approach to Taranaki ("The Native Difficulty", 1879). Ihaia Tainui (MHR Southern Māori), who had replaced Taiaroa when he was elevated to the upper house (Legislative Council) by Grey in February 1879, had cutting comments on 25 July 1879, 'Do not blame Mr. Sheehan (the Native Affairs Minister) or the government for having caused that trouble. It was caused by the previous government' (New Zealand Parliament, 1879b). And Hori Keri Taiaroa, in the Legislative Council in August 1879 demanded to know what actions the government intended to take with the Taranaki prisoners in the Mount Cook jail (New Zealand Parliament, 1879d). Essentially all the Māori MPs were unimpressed with Grey's and Sheehan's handling of the Taranaki situation. And this weighed heavily on Tomoana's mind when there was a second vote of no-confidence in Grey's government within days of him being seated in parliament. Tomoana was placed in a terrible spot of

siding with Grey or siding with the opposition. From the parliamentary record, Tomoana's speech on the 25 July 1879 was as follows:

I was a Government man, I liked the government…That was why we supported the new government; hence the appointment of the Grey ministry. He said that he would administer the affairs of the Maori people-his children as he termed them-...But when I see the troubles that have arisen, and my own people incarcerated I feel sad at heart...I had heard that the Government had given back certain land to the Maoris. The Maoris being taken into custody on that very land, and this was the Government that was to protect them.... Not that I agree with the opposition-they are the same. I say again that it is not that I am in favour of the opposition, because they are just the same. Were the opposition to get to power they would act in exactly the same manner as the Government. (New Zealand Parliament, 1879a)

The tone of Tomoana's speech indicates that he was open to supporting Grey's government. He mentioned that he was 'a government man' and that he 'liked the government'. This is consistent with his late brother Karaitiana Takamoana, having voted for Grey in the November 1877 vote of no-confidence. However, the imprisonment of Taranaki prisoners was very much a troubling issue for Tomoana. Grey's government came under relentless attack from the opposition following claims of maladministration in Native Affairs at that time. And it was in those debates, after days of arguments in the House that a vote of no-confidence was affected.

In that vote, Tomoana voted for no-confidence along with Hori Karaka Tāwhiti (MHR Northern Māori). The other Māori MPs, Ihaia Tainui (MHR Southern Māori) and Noani Nahe (MHR Western Māori) voted to support Grey. Grey's government lost the vote considerably by 47-33 (New Zealand Parliament, 1879c). It was a resounding defeat. The complexity of Tomoana's relationship with Grey always made it possible for Grey to cajole his support in the future. But that was another issue for another time in the Parliament as Grey looked towards other options to maintain power.

General Election August- September 1879

After the July 1879 vote of no-confidence, instead of resigning, Grey decided to go back to the voters for fresh elections between August and September 1879. At the conclusion of the elections, and to the surprise of many, Grey and his supporters did very well. Two former premiers and senior opposition members, William Fox and Frederick Whitaker had lost their elections. And in the aftermath of the elections, it would fall to John Hall (MHR Selwyn) to lead the opposition. He had served in the House previously between 1855-1860 and 1866-1872. And he was in the Legislative Council from 1876-1879. Hēnare Tomoana was again returned as the MP for Eastern Māori. His vote of no-confidence in Grey was barely a consideration in that election ("Election Intelligence", 1879). However, Hori Tāwhiti (MHR Northern Māori), had lost his seat to Hone Mohi Tāwhai who supported Grey ("The New Parliament", 1879). The other elected Māori

MPs, Ihaia Tainui (MHR Southern Māori) and the newly elected Wiremu Te Wheoro (MHR Western Māori) were also known supporters of Grey.

The term 'politically messy' although a vernacular term, is the best way to describe the state of the government and opposition blocs in the House after the 1879 elections. What was certain though, there was no longer 47 votes against Grey as had occurred in the July 1879 vote of no-confidence. The newspapers after the election had difficulty trying to work out how many members belonged to the government and opposition blocs ("The New House", 1879; "The Caucuses", 1879; "The New Parliament", 1879). Tōmoana as well as the newly elected Māori MPs were frequently mentioned in the newspapers. The numbers belonging to the government and opposition blocs were clearly in a state of flux and very tight indeed. It was the *Auckland Star*'s appraisal of the opposition bloc numbers that was most revealing about Hēnare Tomoana and the other Māori MPs. It mentioned that there was an opposition caucus meeting of 34 members. But it was noted that Tomoana did not attend that caucus ("The House this Afternoon", 1879) It also asserted that all the 4 Māori MPs would be voting with the government which claimed a certainty of 46 members. With the numbers between the government and opposition being so close, the support of all the Māori MPs was critical for any political bloc to maintain or claim power. Tomoana had already voted against Grey in July 1879, but he was not strictly within the opposition's bloc of supporters. The newspapers at the time could not pinpoint exactly where his allegiances lay. On the 27 September 1879, the *Hawkes Bay Herald* commented that there were more caucus meetings of both the opposition and the government, and it was mentioned that Tomoana did not attend either caucus meeting ("Wellington Gossip", 1879a). And on the same day, the *Thames Star* referred to the situation that 'Much disgust was felt that Mr. Tomoana could not be induced (though great efforts were made) to attend the opposition caucus ("Parliamentary Gossip", 1879). The newspapers at the time were inconsistent about which side Tomoana would support ("Political Gossip", 1879; "Political Intelligence", 1879; "Parliamentary", 1879)

Eventually the no-confidence vote was formally placed before the House on 3 October 1879. It was a dramatic scene. Wiremu Te Wheoro (MHR Western Māori) initially refused to vote. He simply sat in his chair in the debating chamber. Ebenezor Hamlin (MHR Franklin) for the government, and Frederick A. Whitaker (MHR Waipa) for the opposition, gathered on each side of Te Wheoro. They both tried to coax him to go their way, but he would not budge. It was only after the Speaker of the House ordered that members must go into the lobbies that Te Wheoro arose and voted with Grey's government ("Wellington Gossip", 1879b). Tomoana on the other hand voted against Grey. Tomoana formally mentioned his reasons for siding with the opposition. It was because 'not one promise affecting Natives through the islands had been fulfilled'. He personally, was not opposed to the Native Minister (John Sheehan, MHR Thames), nor to the Premier (Sir George Grey), but he considered they had misrepresented Native Affairs ("The No-Confidence Debate", 1879). With Tomoana's vote, Grey's government was defeated, but it was ultimately by the slimmest of margins 43-41 votes (New

Zealand Parliament, 1879e). The *Marlborough Express* summed up the situation 'one Maori vote has defeated the Ministry' ("Ministerial Defeat" 1879).

Hēnare Tomoana in histories

Māori historians and commentators seem to have missed the point that Tomoana was the critical vote in ending the Grey government. Keith Sorrenson (Ngāti Pukenga), and Tiopira McDowell (Ngāti Hine) merely mention him in general terms along with the other Māori MPs who served as a parliamentarian in the nineteenth century (Sorrenson, 1986; McDowell, 2013). Ranginui Walker (Whakatōhea) mentions Tomoana more in his role of Kōtahitanga meetings rather than his time in the New Zealand House of Representatives (Walker, 1990). Misremembering of Tomoana appears to become more intensified in the modern period. There is scant information about him, or nothing at all by general historians (Oliver, 1961; Sinclair, 1961; Bassett, 1975; McIvor, 1989; Oliver, 1981; Rice & Oliver 1992; Garner, 1995; Bunce, 1998). And this is in distinct contrast to the nineteenth century histories by Rusden and Saunders which refer to Tomoana and other Māori MPs quite extensively (Rusden, 1895; Saunders, 1899).

Tomoana's role in the fall of the Grey government has remained neglected to date. This is partly because other MPs have instead been given the credit. Keith Sinclair's preeminence and influence in history academia in the later twentieth century has helped focus attention on four Auckland MPs as being responsible for Grey's downfall. He noted that 'after the defection of four Auckland members, Grey resigned in October 1879' (Sinclair, 1990). They have often been referred to disparagingly in literature as 'the four Auckland rats' (Bassett, 1975, p.76). These four Auckland members refer to William Colbeck (MHR Marsden), William Swanson (MHR Newton), William Hurst (MHR Auckland West) and Reader Wood (MHR Waitemata). Sinclair's assertion however is plainly wrong. Colbeck, Swanson, Hurst and Reader Wood were staunch supporters of Sir George Grey. All of these MPs voted solidly with Grey on that critical 3 October 1879 vote of no-confidence. Sinclair is confused about the role of these MPs. Grey had already resigned as Premier and gave up the leadership of the liberal bloc in the House days after the 3 October 1879 no-confidence vote. When they eventually backed John Hall's government, it was weeks after the resignation of Grey as premier and leader. By that stage, Grey had been marginalized within the liberal bloc of MPs. And John Hall was cajoling any of those liberal bloc MPs to support him in power. It is this historical fixation on the 'Auckland rats' by the pre-eminent historian Sinclair that has contributed to Tomoana being sidelined in Sir George Grey's downfall. However, there are other authors who have proposed other MPs who were key in the October 1879 no-confidence vote against Grey. William Downie Stewart (MHR City of Dunedin), Edward Masters (MHR Grey Valley) and Vincent Pyke (MHR Dunstan) have been proposed (Rutherford, 1961, p. 625; Brooking, 2014, p. 56; McIvor, 1989). Only Edmund Bohan, gives Tomoana some mention with comments that after the election of 1879 five Otago men and Eastern Māori's Tomoana and Edward Masters of Westland were openly hedging and being courted by all factions (Bohan, 1998, pp.279-280).

Jean Garner's biography of Sir John Hall is problematic in a different way to other authors. Like others, she ignores Tomoana's role in the vote of no-confidence against Grey's government as well (Garner, 1995, p.162). But specific archival records that she uses tell a very different story. Those archival record brings to the forefront the exact relationship that Hall had with Tomoana leading up to the critical 3 October 1879 vote of no-confidence. And it explains why Tomoana eventually became the critical vote against Grey. Garner's account is therefore a suppression of information about Tomoana. And yet Rusden gave quite a few details of the machinations that Hall subjected towards Tomoana in the days leading up to the critical 3 October 1879 vote of no-confidence (Rusden, 1895, pp.201-203). John Hall knew he needed Māori MPs votes to defeat Grey, and he pursued Tomoana's support with all the tenacity that he could muster.

John Hall's archival records

When the new Parliament opened on 24 September 1879, Hall and his close allies were desperately trying to gain the support of any MP they could get. Targeting Tomoana for his vote was astute, given that Tomoana had already voted against Grey. But his support for the opposition was never guaranteed as demonstrated by the newspaper reports at the time. However, Tomoana was on friendly terms with the newly elected Wiremu Te Wheoro (MHR Western Māori). It was therefore possible to use Tomoana and Te Wheoro's relationship to get both to side with Hall. And this is where Hall's archival papers show the extent that he would go towards securing both Tomoana's and Te Wheoro's support. Hall was basically willing to give the appearance that he would give anything to Tomoana and Te Wheoro if only they supported him.

One such item in Hall's archive is very revealing. It is an undated sheet of paper titled 'Tomoana's Statement' that records some basic points (Hall, 1879a). The others are notes, minutes and correspondence regarding confidential meetings that took place in late September and early October 1879. (Hall, 1879b; Hall 1879c, Hadfield, 1879). These documents must be read all together and they show what Tomoana (as well as Te Wheoro) expected from Hall for their support. 'Tomoana's Statement' below highlighted some of the things on offer. The person referred to as 'Sheehan' in the document was Grey's Minister of Native Affairs, John Sheehan. And the words restore Waikato was the return of confiscated lands in the Waikato. The release of Māori prisoners refers to the Taranaki prisoners from Parihaka in the jails at the time.

Tomoana's Statement

> *Mr. Hall first made proposals & offered to make him Native Minister-*
> *Mr Hall promised to make him Māori Minister <u>with all the powers of European Ministers</u>*
> *Mr. Hall promised him control over all Maori lands not Crown grants*
> *Sheehan asserts that Tomoana said that I promised to stop all sales and leases of land.*
> *Henare never said so*

Promised to release all Maori prisoners

& restore Waikato

All the above were monumental promises for any government ministry. To affect all of these wishes, all Tomoana had to do (along with Te Wheoro) was to vote against Grey. Before the vote of no-confidence, the language used in the meetings by Hall's supporters were very suggestive, and inducing, but ministerial posts were promised. And Tomoana and Te Wheoro were confident that the promises that were made would be fulfilled. However, Hadfield was particularly concerned with the language used in the meetings. He had specifically written to Hall about whether Tomoana and Te Wheoro understood the extent of what they were supporting in a Hall Government since interpreters were used in the meetings (Hadfield, 1879). Hall's 'entreaties' with Tomoana essentially finalised the deal where Tomoana would vote against Grey.

However, after the vote of no-confidence, there was a shift in tone by Hall and his supporting MPs. Immediately after the vote, J.D. Ormond (MHR Clive) met Tomoana in the corridors of Parliament later in the evening of 3 October 1879. Tomoana handed Ormond a note written in the Māori language with his and Te Wheoro's wishes, which he expected Hall to sign. Ormond mentioned that Hall was too busy to read the note. The next day (4 October 1879) Ormond mentioned to Tomoana that it had proposals which no government would agree upon (Hall, 1879b). With Hall being 'too busy' to meet with Tomoana, and with a definitive rejection of Tomoana's proposals these were very different to their discussion days earlier. This indicated that the damage had been done to Grey's Government. John Hall was now able to become the premier with all the powers of that office. Hall now had to buttress support amongst MPs to form his own ministry otherwise his own government would fall in a no-confidence vote as well. This meant that Hall could begin bargaining with some of Grey's other supporters. And this included Te Wheoro who voted with Grey in the vote of no-confidence. At a meeting on 7 October 1879, as in all previous meetings, ministerial positions were discussed with Tomoana and Te Wheoro and they were to have substantive powers. The effect is that Tomoana believed at that point, relying on past discussions, that he was to have a ministerial portfolio which had actual responsibilities for native affairs, unlike previous Māori ministers appointed to cabinet (Hall, 1879c).

John Hall's promises change

On Wednesday 8 October 1879, John Hall informed the House that he was asked by the Governor to form a ministry with Tomoana as Native Minister of the Executive Council ("Parliament," 1879). Te Wheoro was not mentioned as having a position. John Bryce (MHR Wanganui) was also to be the Minister of Native Affairs. Hall accordingly had fulfilled part of his promise, but Tomoana's role was exactly that occupied by other Māori Ministers in previous administrations. It had no power and no salary. Tomoana's role was to be largely symbolic. The real power over Native Affairs was to remain with the European Minister, John Bryce. Hall managed to avoid the substantive demands by

Tomoana for three weeks, but it was on 23 October 1879, that political news started to circulate that there was to be a major defection of four of Grey's previous supporters to John Hall's government. These were the four Auckland members mentioned by Sinclair ("Latest", (1879); "Votes for sale for £125,000 each", 1879). James Macandrew, the new liberal leader, could not keep the liberal factions together and Hall could exploit this. Without Grey's leadership the liberal MPs began to splinter (Saunders, 1899, pp.411-412). Accordingly, Hall, by late October 1879, could effectively ignore Tomoana. Only then did Tomoana realise he had been used for the purpose of ending the premiership of Sir George Grey. There was nothing of substance from Hall that he had gained for him or the Māori people. On 28 October 1879 Tomoana's views were then recorded in the newspapers:

On my getting to Parliament before the division of the no-confidence motion in the Grey Government took place, the Hon. Mr Hall and myself had an interview…And the Hon. Mr Hall consented to the demands made by me. After that interview of ours I stood up in the House in the presence of all the members…I said that owing to acquiescence of the Hon. Mr Hall in my requests respecting the Maori people, I would vote with his party. …on Tuesday, the 21st day of October 1879, I stood up in the House. I said but a few words. I said that I had heard the Ministerial statement of the Hon. The Native Minister [John Bryce]; that I did not see in his speech any good that would accrue the Māori people-for some of them are in the prison-house…Thereupon I said to that Government-the Government of the Hon. Mr Hall and his party-for myself I go forth from you. I will cease to sit on your Ministerial benches. And I went out from among them and sat on the other side ("Mr Tomoana and Mr Hall", 1879)

The brutal political reality for Hēnare Tomoana was that he was duped by Hall and his close supporters. It was a lesson in masterful political manipulation on Hall's part as well as political naivete by Tomoana. But none of that has been remembered in most of the historical record. Tomoana has effectively been written out of the historical record in his key role of bringing down Grey's government as part of the continued European-centric narratives dominant in politics and political history. Instead, the central focus remained upon the European MPs actions, rather than Tomoana in bringing down Grey's government. Tomoana for his part though lacked the deeper political judgement in terms of not fully understanding the European MPs social and political nuances in the context of parliamentary politics. When certain types of MPs such as Hall or his supporters gave solemn promises or inferences, they did not actually mean what they meant. The Taranaki prisoners were not to be freed under Hall. And the return of Waikato confiscated land was certainly not going to happen. Grey on the other hand could converse with the Māori MPs in the Māori language and could communicate the limits he was under very clearly. It was an advantage for Hall and his supporters that they used interpreters in their meetings with Tomoana. It helped them to mask their true intentions of giving Tomoana nothing for his support in the key parliamentary vote against Grey. Tomoana took Hall's words and the spirit of the agreement for what it meant to him. He was still relying on older Māori cultural values where oral

understandings and agreements between leaders still meant something within the Māori world. Unfortunately for Tomoana, Hall and his supporters were not bound by those cultural attitudes. But then Grey, as the incumbent premier was in a much more powerful position than Hall after the elections. He could deliver all sorts of favourable inducements for Tomoana, such as salaries and extra financial inducements And yet he chose not to do so. It was a failure not only of imagination of what Grey could offer Tomoana, but also a lack of appreciation of how Hall would act and how worthless were the promises he would give to Tomoana. Hall simply wanted Tomoana's vote to bring down Grey's government, and they got exactly what they wanted. In modern day literature, this has been largely misremembered. This article is therefore an attempt to set the record straight, and to honour Tomoana for his efforts, however misguided, to bring justice to Taranaki and Waikato.

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ENDNOTE

[1] Tomoana's mother was Rotohenga who was also known as Winipere, and his father was Hira Te Ota. He had a younger brother called Pene Te Ua Mairangi. Karaitiana Takamoana who served as the Eastern Māori MP from 1871-1879, and Te Meihana Tākihi were his older half-brothers. Their father was Tinikirunga (Ballara, 1993). Through whakapapa (genealogy) Tomoana was related to all the major Māori leaders within those regions. These included Kurupō Moananui, Tāreha Moananui, and Te Hāpuku. They were all descendants of their great grandparent, Rangikoiānake. And with Rēnata Kawepō, another important rangatira of the region, they all shared the common ancestor Rangikahiua (Higgan McCaughan, 2021)