

844. The Maoris were told that they had to appoint an arbitrator on their behalf to fix the rent and the terms of the lease: you may take that from me; you do not contradict me on that point. Now, I ask you, do you approve of the action of the Maoris in not appointing an arbitrator?—I approve of the action of the Natives, because this mode of appointing an arbitrator is entirely foreign to their ideas.

845. Then, if you had not been visiting your friends of the Ngapuhi you would have taken the same course?—Had I been here I would not have known the meaning of these notices; they were not in Maori.

846. That is not an answer to my question: the question was, If you had not been visiting the Ngapuhi, but had remained on the coast, you would have taken the course the others took, and not consented to the appointment of arbitrators: I want you to answer that question?—I would not have agreed.

847. Before you went to see your friends of the Ngapuhi, had you talked with the other Natives on the question of the leases?—No.

848. Had you any talk with Williams about this question of the renewal of the leases before you went to visit the Ngapuhi?—No.

849. Do you not know before you went to see your friends of the Ngapuhi that Williams had passed Acts providing for the renewal of the leases?—In the year 1887 I heard that the Public Trustee was going to grant renewals, and we sent in a petition against that being done.

850. Did you sign the petition yourself?—Yes, I did.

851. Do you not know that this Parliament had passed Acts providing for renewals of these leases?—I do not know who gave the power.

852. That is not an answer to the question I asked you. I asked whether you did not know that Williams had passed Acts providing for renewals of the leases?—I do not know who gave the power to the Trustee—whether it was given by Parliament, or the Public Trustee, or who.

*Mr. Bell*: I must now appeal to you, sir.

*Hon. the Chairman*: You asked him whether he was aware that Acts had been passed authorising the renewal of these leases.

853. *Mr. Bell*.] I will ask him again. (To witness) Do you not know that Parliament had passed Acts providing for the renewal of these leases?—No.

854. Did you see Mr. Honi Taipua on the coast?—Yes, I saw Honi Taipua.

855. Did you see him in the year 1887?—No, I did not.

856. Or in 1888?—I did.

857. Where?—In Wellington.

858. Is Mr. Taipua the member in the House of Representatives for your district?—Yes.

859. Do you know that he is a member of the Public Trust Board?—I do not know that.

860. Do you now tell the Committee that Mr. Honi Taipua did not explain this matter to you when you saw him in 1888?—Honi Taipua told us that a Bill was being prepared dealing with the leases.

861. Did you not, before seeing Honi Taipua in 1888, speak to him on the question of the leases?—No.

862. Do you not know that Honi Taipua was in communication with your people on this matter both before and after the passing of the Act in 1887?—Honi Taipua sent no letter to me in the year 1887, or afterwards, until I saw him in Wellington.

863. Do you say that Honi Taipua kept back from you and your people what was being done by the Public Trustee about your reserves?—I never said that Honi Taipua kept anything back from us.

864. Then, do you say that he kept your people informed as to what was being done?—He may have informed some people; I do not know.

865. I suppose you are a friend of Mr. Williams?—Mr. Williams is not a friend of mine, although sometimes I go to him to act as interpreter.

866. Did you not speak to Williams several times about these leases before 1888?—No.

867. You say positively that you did not speak to Williams nor Williams to you before 1888 about the renewal of the leases?—No. I never spoke to Williams on the subject, nor did he speak to me. My only communication with Williams was when I had him to interpret what some other European was saying to me about other matters.

868. Did you go to Mr. Hammond about it? You know Mr. Hammond?—Yes.

869. Did you go to him about these leases—the renewal the leases?—Our first communication with Mr. Hammond was at the time of the Arbitration Court sitting; we went to him for advice.

870. Did he give you advice?—No.

871. He refused it, did he?—Perhaps it was not his duty to give us advice.

872. But did he refuse to give you advice?—He went with us to the Arbitration Court and told us what was going on.

873. Then, you talked with him about the Arbitration Court sitting?—Others may have had conversation with him; I had not.

874. Do you know whether your people did have any conversation with him?—I cannot give you mere rumour at all; I never saw any people going there. I cannot say.

875. You do not know what your people said?—I do not know if they went there or not. I do not know that the other people supposed that the arbitrators, and not the Public Trustee, were the persons to grant renewals. We all thought that the Public Trustee and the arbitrators were one person.

876. *Dr. Fitchett*.] To do what?—When the Court sat we found that it was to grant renewals.

877. I understood you to say that you and the other Natives protested at great length against