

*Tureiti te Heuheu* : These surveys, as I have said, were finished in 1886, but up to the present we have been unable to cut off any portion of this land to pay for these surveys, owing to the difficulty I have just mentioned. Therefore for four years and a half these surveys have remained unpaid, and of course interest has accumulated. I have heard that a fixed rate of interest is chargeable on the costs of these surveys from that time until now. Then, as these restrictions on the land are the cause of the surveys not being paid, they have at the same time had the effect of increasing the amount of the expense with which the Natives are saddled. Now, the owners of those blocks have long wished to have the matter settled—that is to say, to have portions cut off to pay for the subdivision—but they have been unable to do so owing to the restricted market; and the owners have repeatedly requested the Government to settle this matter, but up to date nothing has been done. This delay, of course, has raised the amount of interest they will have to pay. And I would mention to the Commissioners that the delay in that payment has not been their fault, but that it is rather the fault of the Government and of the laws. Seeing that it has not been the fault of the Natives, I think the Government should not charge them with interest at all, or, at any, rate only from the date of the Commission. There is another matter which weighs on the Maoris, and that is the Act which ties up the Rohe Potae for three years by means of restrictions upon Europeans who might wish to purchase land there. These restrictions extend also over a great part of the Taupo country. Had this land been open to free trade no doubt the Maoris could have sold on much better terms than they have been getting from the Government. These are all the remarks I have to make, and if you wish to ask me any questions I will answer them.

*Mr. Rees* : You have spoken very fully and very clearly, and, as we understand there are some more of the leading men who wish to speak, we shall not ask any questions.

*Tokena Kerehi* : Greetings to you, the Commissioners sent here by the Governor. All those around me are young men, not like me, an old man. I am an ancient man [pointing to the wrinkles on his face]. I want the Government to allow us to lease our lands, because if we are not allowed to lease how can we pay the expenses incidental to subdividing the land and the surveys? It is because these sources of revenue are closed to us that we are compelled to cut off portions of the land, and give them to the Government. Some blocks contain, say, 40,000 acres, and we have to cut off as much as 20,000 acres to pay the expenses of the surveys. It is because we are not allowed to lease that we are compelled to do this sort of thing. But if we were allowed to lease we should be furnished with money, and be able to pay for the surveys. Therefore I ask the Commissioners to use their influence to stop this *kohuru* (murdering). We ought certainly to punish you and the Government if you go on murdering the Maoris in this way. That is why I stand up to make my earnest appeal to you to open the door to us to lease. I would ask you to make this quite clear to the Government, so that we may receive a revenue from the land, and be able to pay for surveys, and so that Europeans wishing to treat with the Maoris for land would be able to come amongst them and do so. So that, supposing I wanted to sell a piece of land, I would not be compelled to take this 1s. 6d. an acre, but be enabled to get a bigger price. That is why I call the present system *kohuru*, for this 1s. 6d. is too small a price. We sold one piece of land at 5s. an acre, and that is the only piece we consider we got properly paid for.

*Waraki Kapu* : It was on my motion that the meeting was adjourned till to-night. My father, Kapu, died last winter, and up to this date I have not been able to have his will proved owing to the delay on the part of the Government in opening the Court. The chiefs who are present have discussed the matters under consideration both outside and inside, as well as here to-night, and therefore I will confine myself to matters which concern myself—I will give the reasons why I asked that the meeting should be adjourned till to-night. Hauhungaroa is the name of a block of land that was adjudicated on in Taupo, and I think that that adjudication was wrong. Waihaha, the next block to that, is in a similar position. The adjudication in respect to the next block, Te Hoi, I consider to be all right, because it was awarded to me and Hitire. The next division to that, Hoekane, is being adjudicated upon now by the Court. With regard to the 20,000 acres cut off by the Government in the Hoekane division for survey-charges, I say that that was wrong, and should not have been done. These 20,000 acres ought to be held in suspense. Regarding Te Hoi I have the same complaint to make.

*Mr. Rees* : The Commissioners will ask that the things which have been spoken of may be examined, in order to see that they are fair.

*Ngakurute te Rangikaiwhiria* : I will not detain the Commission long. I support what Te Heuheu has told the Commission—namely, those matters which he explained, and which, if looked into, would probably result in benefit to the Maori people; and I also agree with him in respect of those matters which he said were hurtful to the Maoris. As to the suggestion concerning the Maori Committee, I agree that if it were given full *mana* (authority) by the Government it would be able to work out much benefit to the Maoris. I also agree with what Tokena said about leases. That is with reference to your—the Commissioners'—explanation about waste lands that are useless to us. I support the suggestion that such lands should be leased. Such leases should be open to public competition, so that the Maoris would get the biggest price obtainable. In this way the benefit arising to the Maoris, through their Committees, would be shared in by the whole colony. But if, on the other hand, the Government persist in maintaining their restrictions over the Maori land it will be a long time before the Maoris will be in a thriving condition. And I would ask, therefore, that the restrictions placed by the Government over the Taupo country should be removed. That is all I have to say.

*Te Rangikaripiripia* : I stand up to support the Committee's idea, provided the Government will allow the Ngatituwharetoa to have such a Committee, and will recognise it. If the Government will allow us to appoint this Committee, and will authorise it, we shall be able to do a great many of those things that we have been talking about, for then the Committee would enter into and decide matters that are in dispute—that is to say, such matters as were mentioned by Te Heuheu in his speech. I conclude by saying that I support all that Te Heuheu said.