

*Mr. Rees.*] Do the others say the same? Do they think that this is not merely their own opinion, but that it will meet with the approval of the Natives generally?—Yes. We think others hold the same views. A great number indeed of the people would consent to that arrangement. Such things as the Committee could not settle, let the Court settle.

We are glad that you have come before us, and we shall pay attention to what you have said. We deal with you just as if all the others were present. There is nothing secret.—That is a very excellent suggestion of the Commissioners, that things should be settled by the Committees, and that when things come before them that they are not able to settle, then let those things go before the Court. There are some who, I think, would desire in any case where there were difficulties that the Committee could not settle, and when reference is made to the Court, that then the whole inquiry should be reopened. The Committees would in that case be set on one side, and the Court would go into the whole inquiry from the beginning. I wish to ask the Commissioners would that be the way in which it would be done?

You must not ask the Commissioners, for we cannot answer you as to that. We can only report of the things put before us, and say, "These are facts and opinions." We gather together from all parts of the country not kumeras and pigs, and things of that sort, but opinions, and we put them in shape and order, and lay them before the Governor. All your statements have been taken down, and will be paid attention to.

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KAWAKAWA, SATURDAY, 4TH APRIL, 1891.

The Commission sat in the Courthouse at 5 p.m. Present: Messrs. W. L. Rees, M.H.R., and Thomas Mackay.

*Mr. Rees:* As Wi Pomare and some of the other Natives thought it wise to take time to think over the matters submitted to them, and the Commissioners promised to meet them again to-day, we are now here for that purpose. We met at Waimate not a very large meeting, but a number of the representative people of the Ngapuhi Tribe, including Hone Peeti, Wi Katene, and others, and they went a step further than the Natives here, and expressed themselves without hesitation in favour of the suggestions thrown out by the Commissioners. And a matter was mentioned there which was only lightly touched upon here—a matter not merely of dealing with the land, as to the power of the Committees and any body authorised both by the Maoris and the Europeans to deal with questions affecting Maori interests, such as surveys. The Maoris have immense estates of land, and they have children growing up, in all parts of the North Island especially. Now, the education which the children get at the present time is not sufficient, that is clear. The Maori children, both boys and girls, should be taught not merely to read and write in books, but they should be taught trades. They should be taught to plough, reap, and shear, look after cattle and sheep, grow fruit, make boots and shoes, and carpenter, and, in fact, all the things European children are taught Maori children should be taught. Now, if the Maoris were to work together they could have great estates set apart in all parts of the North Island for schools. And if that were done the Committees could see that everything was properly done for the children, and these children would grow up able to use their hands as well as their brains, just the same as the Europeans. On these school-farms they might have sheep-stations and dairy-farms. If the Maoris give the land the schools would be pretty well self-supporting. That can only be done by the Natives joining together. And instead of being so many thousands of individuals, each one for himself, they would be one great army all working together. If the Commission, therefore, could hear the Natives express their opinion upon that as well as those other points, it might lead to very good results in the Parliament. Of course we do not want to prevent them speaking upon any other subject; but we throw this out as a suggestion for them to think about and speak about, so that they may do as much good as possible with the advantage they now have of speaking with the Commissioners. Are you, Wi Pomare, a clergyman of the Church of England?

*Wi Pomare:* Yes; I formerly was. Perhaps I may be permitted to speak on the subject that has just been mentioned. I have already spoken to the Commissioners with regard to the Native Committees, and I said then that I was unable to say more on that occasion until the whole of the Ngapuhi expressed their thoughts. But now, with respect to the schools, I should like to say something about that. I have applied to the Government to give authority to Native Committees to have the control of the Native schools. The Government did not consent. Now, I ask the Commissioners to induce the Government to give the necessary legal control for the management of their schools into the hands of the Native Committees. The Native Committees that now exist have no real power, and that is the reason why parents take away their children from the schools to their own homes, where they grow up in ignorance. And in that way we are unable to compel the children to attend the schools, the parents keeping them at their own homes. My petition has reached the Minister of Education. Now, with regard to what Mr. Rees has said with respect to the children being educated in farm-work, the Committee has not power in that direction. This is my final word: I wish that the Government will give full authority to have these things that were spoken of carried out, and effect given to them. I also spoke about this subject when Mr. Ballance was Native Minister. I spoke to him here at Kawakawa on the subject. I applied to him that a large school might be given for the whole of the children of the Ngapuhi, similar to the one at Te Aute, near Napier. Mr. Ballance did not make any reply to my request. I now ask the Commissioners, therefore, that a school such as I have mentioned should be established for the Ngapuhi children, and that the Natives should be consulted about setting land apart for its maintenance. That is all I have to say. I might perhaps be preventing others from speaking if I continued longer.

*Te Atimana Wharerau:* Salutations to you, the Commissioners. The last speaker has spoken with reference to the subject of schools. With respect to what the Commissioners have said as to their being willing to hear what the Natives had to say, I wish to speak now with reference to the portion that was left unsaid at the last meeting as to the troubles about our lands. Some of the