

The second word that I wish to say to you is this: With regard to the agents and the lawyers who at present appear in the Native Land Court, let the Commissioners report that these persons be on longer allowed to practise in that Court. Let the Commissioners be very strenuous in enforcing this request. And let immediate action be taken so soon as the Commissioners arrive in Wellington, instead of waiting until the present Waikopiro case be concluded. I desire to explain some of the particulars connected with several of the reserves alluded to generally by the last speaker. First of all with regard to Matauomaui. That land was reserved for the benefit of the tribe. But when Te Moananui died Te Karauria rose up and sold that reserve. There is another block of land that I wish also to bring under the notice of the Commissioners. It is named Petene. That is land held under Crown grant. At the time it was Crown-granted there were ten persons included in the grant to act as for the tribe. Subsequently that block was leased, but a portion of it, comprising some six hundred odd acres, was set apart for the Native people. Then afterwards those ten persons who were included in the grant sold their interests at different periods and to different persons. Two of the grantees sold, and in consequence of their sale a European took the portion of the reserve that was made for the use of the whole people. When these had sold, the interest of another person in the grant was also purchased. I was appointed trustee for two minors, and I did not consent to the sale that was made by these minors. Those two people who sold had their shares cut out, and the only right that the people now have to the land is through my position as trustee in declining to sell the interest of the minors; and for the last twenty years the tribe have been relying on my protection in the matter. What the European desires is to get hold of that land. To this matter I would very much like the Commissioners to give some attention, because the Natives have suffered great injury through it. One of the interests of the children I have leased to the European for the purpose of getting something out of the land to be applied to the maintenance of the children. I draw the rent from that lease and hand it over to the Public Trustee. That is all I have to say.

*Mr. Carroll:*] You desire that the whole of the people should be admitted as owners?—My desire is that the tribe should be included in the title of ownership to the portion reserved—that is to say, the six hundred odd acres. That is the portion remaining over after the sale.

*Henare Matua:* I wish now to supply something that I omitted when I previously addressed the Commissioners. There is another block of land that I desire to mention to them. The boundaries of this particular land were quite clear when it was surveyed, but the Government have since interfered and altered those boundaries. Tawaputahi is the name of the block. In respect of another block of land, called Ngatarawa, some of the persons in the grant for it have sold. The reason why that sale took place is that certain people signed other persons' names to the deed. The people whose names were so signed did not sign before witnesses. There is yet another block, named Whakapirau, in respect of which the people entitled to do so did not sign the conveyance. Another block is Pukehou. That was land reserved for the benefit of the whole tribe, at the time that the Government purchases were made. These are all the cases. Other persons can mention any other cases there may be.

*Renata Pukututu:* I wish first of all to congratulate the several visitors who are here. I welcome the Commissioners who have come here to make inquiry of the Natives of this part of the country—Heretaunga—with regard to the matters that they have been appointed to investigate. These are all the complimentary remarks I desire to make. What I more particularly wish to refer to now is the explanation which Mr. Carroll offered as to the inquiries that the Commissioners address to the Natives. Let me speak in the first place concerning the good laws and the bad laws. My idea is that no good law at all has come from the Government to the Natives. There are many other things that are, in my opinion, instigated by the Government, and which I consider to be wrong. I do not believe in the Native Land Administration Act of 1886. What I think is that the Maori people should make their own law; and I also support what Henare Matua said about having a Native Committee for the Hawke's Bay District. At present the District Committees of Hawke's Bay are just "fooling round" with small and trivial cases, and, in fact, doing nothing in particular. Their time is altogether taken up with the investigation of petty cases. We hope that the Government will clothe the Native Committees with proper and sufficient power. That is all I have to say.

*Hori Ropiha:* I congratulate the Commissioners upon their visit to this place under the authority of the present Government. I wish prosperity to the Queen, the ruler of nations, to the Government of the colony, and to both the races inhabiting it. What I have to say with regard to the matters with which the Commission is dealing is to express my hope that the laws proposed for the Native people will be made light and easy, because there are a great many troubles and difficulties existing at present between us and the Government. Those weighty matters mentioned by Henare Matua, connected with the reserves, are the things that especially trouble us. We wish that the laws which affect us should be more closely assimilated to our own customs and usages, and that the laws relating to our lands should be made far more simple. At the present time these too-cumbrous laws hamper us greatly. The Natives should have power to lease their own lands, and not the Government. I also desire that the process followed by the Native Land Court with regard to the leasing of Native land should be made simpler and easier, for the present system is weighty and oppressive towards us. I likewise think that for the ensuing year the existing District Committees should have extended powers and jurisdiction. At the present time their powers are very feeble indeed. I consider that if they were clothed with larger powers these would stimulate them to ampler duties, and to greater activity in the performance of those duties. I fully indorse what has been said by Henare Matua and Henare Tomoana. There are a great number of these Native blocks in a bad position, and we hope that things will be made simpler, clearer, and lighter than they are at present. We hope that the Government will see that exhaustive inquiry is made regarding these lands, because very many of our blocks are surrounded with confusion and difficulty.