

and love the Native Department so much, that they like to pay the 10-per-cent. duty to keep them going. That is the theory of the Government—that they want the Native Land Court kept up, and therefore they pay the 10-per-cent. duty. Now we shall be able to tell the Government and the Parliament that the Natives do not want to pay the 10-per-cent. duty, or to have the Native Land Court or the Native Department kept up as they now are. I wish to ask Taipua to appeal to the Natives, or to ask them to consider this: whether, if the restriction be taken off the Native land so far as allowing the Maoris to lease their lands, but not to sell, they would regard that as sufficient. I do not want an answer now. Let them take time to consider this matter. Let them also consider this, and speak about it now: In the Legislative Council there are two Maori members at the present time. One of them is Taiaroa, the southern member, and the other is Ropata, of the Ngatiporou. Now, if we are going to propose important changes in the law, such as all the Maoris wish to see proposed, it would be wise for them to consider whether they should ask that more Maori members should be put in the Upper House. In the House of Representatives they have, at any rate, Mr. Carroll, Hoani himself—I do not know anything about this young Northern member who has recently been elected—and then there is Pratt. They have therefore some men in the Lower House who can speak with some authority about the wants of the Maoris. You must consider whether or not there is sufficient Maori brains as well as a sufficient knowledge of Maori laws in the Upper House. That is a matter for you to think over. We shall have our report translated into Maori, and circulated among the whole of the Maori tribes. Then, of course, people can pull it to pieces and make what statements they like upon the contents of the report.

*Hoani Taipua*: Is it only with regard to the Upper House that you wish us to speak, and not the Lower House as well?

*Mr. Rées*: I suggest the Upper House, because if the laws are to be changed now is the time. Of course you may speak about the Lower House if you like.

*Hoani Taipua*: We wish for increased representation both in the Upper House and in the Lower House. There is another thing that I wish to say to the Commissioners: that the money arising from the land should not be given to one person in any case where the Government had purchased, but that strict safeguards be imposed, so that any individual may not be able to go to the Commissioner and draw money in respect of a block for which there are many owners. My meaning is that individual dealing should be absolutely discontinued where the lands are held in common. If this recommendation is in your report, when I am in the House I shall support your report; and if it is not included I shall not support it.

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