

10. Is there mining up there?—No, not yet.
11. The present land affected by mining is this 40,000 or 50,000 acres?—Yes. We have been paying rates and taxes on that land for ages, and I suppose the rates and taxes must come to more than the surface-value.
12. What would you understand to be the charges on your timber land?—They are of an immense amount.
13. Some of your land has been taken up for mining purposes?—Yes.
14. By arrangement with yourselves?—Yes.
15. How much?—The Wangapoua Blocks.
16. How many acres have been taken up for mining?—About 36,000 acres.
17. What arrangement is there—supposing prospecting turns out all right—for taking out mining rights?—They have a right to take up others.
18. Is this 36,000 acres part of the forty?—Yes.
19. Then, practically the whole of your land is under offer to a mining syndicate?—Yes, they have practically paid the money.
20. What syndicate is this?—The Kauri Company's Gold Estates Company.
21. *Mr. Carncross.*] You say you have lost £63,000 in four years?—Yes.
22. I suppose it would not be hard to come to terms to buy you out?—Yes, uncommonly hard, as things are looking up.
23. Things are mending?—Wonderfully.
24. You do not expect this mining to continue?—No.
25. How many hands do you give employment to in the bush?—I have let contracts lately for about 60, 70, perhaps 80,000,000ft.; all that is brought out by men in the bush. We have men cutting them into lengths in the bush, making dams, and driving, &c.
26. How many men have you employed?—Indirectly, 4,000. The contractors' men may not absolutely be in our employ, but in the employ of our contractors.
27. There are some parts of your land you are quite willing to allow men to go on?—On certain sections.
28. That does not interfere with your creeks?—We have sold some land, and we have kept control of the creeks.
29. About the syndicate?—It is an absolute company.
30. How much money have they put into it?—About £170,000 solid cash.
31. That is for the right of the property?—Yes.
32. Have they done anything practical for you?—They have now started to work right away. They cannot put any more men on; they have have put as many on as they can. If this Bill passes they will have to take men off.
33. Have you any machinery in it?—They have been opening up.
34. Is the Kauri Timber Company interested?—Deeply.
35. *Mr. Fraser.*] You said you paid some taxes since you purchased the land. What benefits have you derived? Has there been any expenditure on roads?—We have no benefit at all. We have to make our own roads; there are really no roads.
36. You referred to local bodies' rates, or paying land-tax?—We have had to pay land-tax and local Council's rates and taxes, assessed on the income from the land.
37. You were speaking about the surface-value, and that that would probably be assessed at 1s. per 100ft. Have you any grounds for making that statement?—None whatever. I presume what the Government would sell at we should be willing to sell at.
38. The price of agricultural land that the Government want to take away, the value is calculated upon the capitalists' profits. Why should not the same rule apply to the timber-land?—If you put it in that way, I expect the timber will increase 30 or 40 per cent.
39. Is there no provision in the Bill which limits the compensation the company give to any particular parts?—Only the surface-value land.
40. You say this English company paid from £80,000 to £100,000?—They have paid it into the bank either here or in England.
41. To the credit of whom?—To the credit of the Gold Estates Company.
42. I understood you to say the £80,000 to £100,000 was for the right to prospect?—It is to be spent on the ground whether there is gold there or not.
43. *Mr. Carncross.*] You said the company is deeply interested?—We have a certain quantity of shares. The company has got a capital of £250,000, of which practically £100,000 of that is retained for prospecting the land. It is paid up to find out where there is gold.
44. *Mr. Fraser.*] The remainder?—It is spent in various ways.
45. *Mr. Carncross.*] What do you estimate their interest at?—I could not answer that question exactly. It is a private thing between the company and ourselves.
46. *Mr. Fraser.*] Has this company you refer to spent any money so far?—Yes, and spending more every day.
47. Can you give an idea as to how much?—I could not.
48. With regard to your own position apart from mining, you contend, I understand, that if this Bill is given effect to, by allowing all and sundry the right to prospect and clear roads throughout your land, it would hamper your industry and ultimately compel you to give up?—Yes; perhaps these people will wedge up a creek and interfere with water that we could get timber out by.
49. Do I understand you to mean that, in the event of the Bill passing, the only fair way would be to claim that the whole be taken from you at a fair value?—Yes, at a fair value, and the value must be taken on the basis that I stated. Then, of course, it will want £500,000 to £700,000.
50. Then, you have 40,000 or 50,000 acres. Supposing they were purchased at what you consider it fair compensation for these particular acres, that would be the value of these. It is not,