

20. Do you think the European members of the Board would accept £5 a year as their sole remuneration?—That is why I say leave it for our lord and protector, the Government, to fix the price. The House would do that.

21. Well, supposing the Government say that each member of the Board is to be paid at the rate of £200 per annum?—I should have nothing to say.

*The Chairman* : I do not think this line of questions should continue. It appears to me it is simply wasting time.

*Mr. Monk* : I think it is very instructive, Mr. Chairman.

*The Chairman* : I shall certainly stop that line of questions. It is certainly a waste of time.

*Mr. Kaihau* : I want to see how Mr. Wi Pere is justified in claiming that if he gets what he wants and gets his Board appointed, the welfare of the Maoris will be absolutely secured. He does not appear to see that this will be a burden that will have to be met. If seven members of the Board are to be paid £200 a year each, that means £1,400. I think this is a matter that I am entirely justified in asking questions upon. If I am debarred from asking questions upon this subject, how am I to prove that the Board will not do injury?

*The Chairman* : Then the same line of argument will hold good in the case of Mr. Kaihau's views.

*Mr. Kaihau* : Yes, very well, I am quite prepared when I come to give evidence about my Council—in support of these Councils—to answer any questions as to how the members of the Council are proposed to be paid, or any questions they (the Committee) may see fit to ask me; but if the chairman compels me to stop I suppose I will have to stop.

*The Chairman* : If this matter is to receive due consideration the Committee cannot spare the rest of the session for discussing this one petition.

*Witness* : Now I say if it is intended that the Maoris shall find the money to pay all these expenses, then I would draw the attention of the members of the Committee to this. In times past when a Maori leased 10,000 acres of land, he got only £100 rent for that 10,000 acres. Now, if we have a Board constituted which will be competent to attend to these matters, the administration of lands, leases, and so forth, they would get £1,500 to £2,000 rent for land for which they are only now getting £100—that must be for the benefit of the Maoris, and I say the Maoris must find the money to pay expenses—why not take these expenses out of the enhanced proceeds from the lands? The Board has been instrumental in getting the larger amount of rent, and even if they have to take as much as 1 per cent. let it be taken out of that, or supposing they have to take say 1d. out of every £1 to meet the expenses, and they take it, I have no objection. The Board has been instrumental in getting that money. It is distinctly set forth in the Bill that Government may from time to time appropriate moneys, which are to be paid out of the consolidated revenue. Now, in some leases which have been negotiated it has cost £2,000 and £3,000 before the lease was finally completed. Now, where does all the knowledge and intelligence come in in a transaction of that kind? And I say that if the Board is once constituted it will do away with every one of those undesirable things—the Maoris will no longer be at the mercy of unscrupulous lawyers, interpreters, clerks, pakehas trying to obtain land, and Maoris who are willing for a consideration to betray their fellows. Why not give it to some competent person or body of people to manage, and then, if money has to be found to meet expenses, take at the rate of 1d. per £1 out of the money so derived and pay these expenses? I would not have made that statement if I had not been asked the question I was asked. The Bill is perfectly clear.

22. *Mr. Kaihau*.] Well, the members are to be partly European and partly Maori. The Board is to be constituted by some Europeans and some Maoris. That is what you say?—Yes.

23. And are all those Maoris to be conversant with the European language—all able to speak English—they will know how to speak Maori?—No; I say that the European members of the Board are to be chosen from amongst Government officials or other competent Europeans who are experts in the Maori language.

24. Yes; but if the appointment of the European members of the Board is to lie with the Government, and the Government may not have Europeans who are experts in the Maori language to appoint, or they may not choose to appoint them, what would be done then?—Oh, well, I say it would be much better to have them all experts in the Maori language if it can be so arranged; if not, if one individual can speak Maori that would be quite sufficient.

25. Well, supposing that a Board was so constituted that none of the Maori members could speak English and none of the English members could speak Maori, what would you do for an interpreter?—Oh, that would be for the Government to decide. If the Government had constituted the Board in such a way, they would have to find the means to provide for the necessities of life.

26. Well, that will mean that an interpreter will be required, will it not?—Oh, that is for them to say.

27. Are you not aware that lawyers do a great deal of the Government work at the present time; that they take a very considerable part in Government business?—Yes, they do their own work.

28. And do they not get paid large salaries yearly?—The Government pays them.

29. Yes; but it is the colony that finds the money for it. It is not the members of the Government who pay it out of their own pockets?—Of course, but then the Government are the people who control the moneys—the property of the colony.

30. Yes. Well, that would be an encumbrance, or a demand that would have to be met. That would also have to be met by the Maori lands?—No.

31. Well, then, where is the money to come from to pay these Boards. Is it to fall down from heaven especially for that purpose?—Whatever sum of money is appropriated by the House for that purpose.